THE

HISTORY

OF

Miſs CLARINDA CATHCART,

AND

Miſs FANNY RENTON.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Virtue, oft times, howe'er oppreſs'd ſhe ſeems,
(How few to reſcue, tho' deplor'd by all!)
Tho' folly's eye the angel vanquiſh'd deems,
Survives her death, and triumphs in her fall.
Stephenſon's Poems.

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MDCCLXVI.

TO

The QUEEN.

MADAM,

INSPIRED by the hope of a favourable reception, yet with the utmoſt diffidence, I have preſumed to addreſs the following Hiſtory to Your Majeſty.

If it has any merit, if the deſign and ſentiments are thought good, whatever blemiſhes it may otherwiſe have, I flatter myſelf you will not think it unworthy your favour.

I am

I am afraid it may be thought preſumption in me, who have only uninſtructed nature for my guide, to attempt a work, which ought to be left to thoſe of a liberal and refined education; but as ſuch ſeldom favour the world with productions of this kind, and as, however prohibited by parents and guardians, they are almoſt univerſally read by the youth of both ſexes, I have often wondered, and, indeed, regretted, that there was not a greater number of them; at leaſt innocent and entertaining.

With a deſign of adding to the few that are really ſo, and not having it in my power to be more uſefully employed, I wrote the following

following novel. If it is not in a learned, or elegant ſtile, I flatter myſelf it is not the leſs natural and inſtructive. 'Tis poſſible there may be danger, which I do not perceive, in the moſt innocent novel; but, conſcious of a good intention, to whom could I ſo properly addreſs it, as to Your Majeſty?—As the eminence of your rank ſets you above common prejudice, ſo the clearneſs of your diſcernment will eaſily diſtinguiſh errors proceeding from the head alone, and your candour make allowances for defects in which the heart had no ſhare.

May tranquillity, peace, and contentment reign in every breaſt, from the Royal Palace, to the

Humble

Humble Cottage: May every ſubject of *Great Britain* have a grateful ſenſe of the bleſſings they enjoy: May they be enabled to perform their duty, and be ſucceſsful in the various ſtations Providence has allotted them: May our moſt Gracious Sovereign the King, with Your Majeſty, have a long, happy, and flouriſhing reign; and that this may be the wiſh of every heart, is the ardent prayer of her, who has the honour to ſubſcribe herſelf, Madam,

Your MAJESTY's
Moſt Humble,
Moſt Devoted, and
Moſt faithful ſubject,

J. M.

Principal Perſons.

Sir WILLIAM RENTON, Bart.——Living at *Renton Park*, his ſeat in *Yorkſhire*.

Lady RENTON——Wife of Sir *William*.

HARRY RENTON, Eſq.——Their eldeſt ſon, abroad on his travels.

Capt. RENTON——Their youngeſt ſon, abroad with the regiment commanded by Sir *Charles Cheſter*, his brother-in-law.

Sir CHARLES CHESTER——Col. of a regiment, ſon-in-law to Sir *William Renton*, abroad with his regiment.

Lady CHESTER——His wife, eldeſt daughter to Sir *William Renton*, at preſent ſpending the ſummer at *Renton Park*.

Miſs CAROLINE RENTON——Second daughter to Sir *William Renton*.

Miſs FANNY RENTON——Third daughter.

Miſs NELLY RENTON——Youngeſt daughter.

Mr. CATHCART——Banker in *London*, a widower.

Miſs CLARINDA CATHCART——His only child, at preſent at *Caſtleton*, on a viſit to her aunt.

Mrs. HELEN CATHCART——Aunt to Miſs *Cathcart*, and heireſs of *Caſtleton*.

Mrs. ROBERTS——An old widow lady, living in *London*.

Miſs BETSY ROBERTS——Couſin to Miſs *Cathcart*, living with her grandmother Mrs. *Roberts*.

Mrs. FLOYD—A widow lady, living in *London*.

Miſs

PRINCIPAL PERSONS.

Miſs NANCY FLOYD——Her eldeſt daughter, friend to Miſs *Cathcart*.

Miſs POLLY FLOYD——Youngeſt daughter.

Miſs SALLY WEST——An intimate acquaintance of Miſs *Cathcart's*, and the Miſs *Floyd's*.

Mr. FRIENDLY——A widower; a gentleman of a ſmall fortune, living at his ſeat, in *Yorkſhire*.

BOB FRIENDLY——His ſon, lieutenant in the army.

TOM HOPE——A young gentleman, under the care of Mr. *Friendly*.

Lord EDGAR——A young nobleman, friend to Mr. *Renton*.

Earl of ELMOR—A young nobleman.

BOB TEMPLE——A young gentleman.

Lady BETTY WILLIAMS——A relation of the *Renton* family.

Sir ROBERT FORREST, Bart.

Lady DOWAGER FORREST——His mother.

Sir GEORGE EVERGREEN——Going out governor to the *Eaſt Indies*.

Lady EVERGREEN——His wife.

Lord DARNLY——A young nobleman.

Mr. DOUGLAS, of *Parkly*—A *Scots* gentleman.

Mrs. DOUGLAS——His wife.

The two Miſs DOUGLAS's——Their daughters.

Mrs. BRECKET——A widow lady, with an immenſe fortune.

THE

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HISTORY

OF

Miſs CLARINDA CATHCART,

AND

Miſs FANNY RENTON.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

May 12, 1762.

CONFINED, my deareſt *Nancy*, as I am to be, to the country, for four long tedious months, and to the company of an old maiden aunt, who, I don't believe, has ſpoke to a male creature, above the ſtation of her coachman, for theſe fifteen years, what, in the name of youth and

beauty, could my father mean, by bringing me here in ſuch a hurry? Had I entered madly into any love-intrigue, in direct oppoſition to the will of my parents, I muſt, at leaſt, have acknowledged the rectitude of this procedure. Beſides, I ſhould then have had the dear hope of my ſwain breaking down walls, killing the great dog, and carrying me off in triumph. But to be brought here without any reaſon, and without hope of relief, at a time, too, when I was engaged in a delightful party of pleaſure, is it not, my dear *Nancy*, to the laſt degree, mortifying?

On *Thurſday* morning I had a call from my couſin *Betſy*. I was telling her how charmingly I had been entertained at laſt night's aſſembly, when my father, without any previous notice, entered my dreſſing-room.

"So,

"So, ſo," ſaid he, "you two are got "together to conſult what top-knots "ſuit your complexions beſt." All the things I had on at the aſſembly lying on the dreſſing-table, he, with his uſual good humour, (God knows, little did I know what was in his head) took up my blond puff, and putting it on *Betſy* behind, aſked if it was a rumple knot? "Lard, ſir," ſaid I, "you would make one be-"lieve you never ſaw a creature of "faſhion: why, that is a puff for "my head." "A puff for your "head, child! I am really afraid, "*Clarinda*, your head is too much "puffed up with pride and vanity: "I don't like theſe late hours of "your aſſemblies; it was five this "morning before you came in." "Why, ſir, you know it was a "ſelect aſſembly, and I could not

" poſſibly break the company; nor " did I conſent to go, till Lady *Ever-* " *green* had got your permiſſion." " That's true, *Clarinda*, (and he gave " me a chuck under the chin) you " are a good girl, naturally; but the " faſhion of this age will ſpoil the " beſt. Come," added he, " I'll refer it " to *Betſy*, whether your complexion is " not faded with laſt night's ramble. " How dead and languid do your " eyes look!" " Dear ſir," ſaid I, " you will put me quite out of hu- " mour with myſelf, if you go on at " this rate."

Betſy's pretty little mouth was juſt going to open, when I clapt my hand on it, and begged ſhe would not confirm what my father had ſaid. " In- " deed, ſir," ſaid *Betſy*, " you won't " think ſo when my couſin is dreſt; " but you don't ſee her often in ſuch " diſhabille."

" diſhabille." " I hope, *Clarinda*," ſaid my father, " you don't take " the aſſiſtance of a little rouge?" " No, indeed," replied I, " I do not." " I never would forgive you," ſaid he, " if you did."

This, my dear *Nancy*, was the moſt of our converſation, till he came to the main point, which ſtruck me dumb. " Well," ſaid he, " *Clarinda*, " the intention of my viſit this morn- " ing was not to chide you. I came " to acquaint you, that I had received " a letter from your aunt *Nell*, who " tells me, ſhe has heard ſuch a " character of you from Lady *Prit-* " *chard*, that ſhe longs to ſee you; " begs I would allow you to paſs " ſome months with her, and hopes " to ſend you back with your com- " plexion not unimproved by the " freſh air of *Caſtleton*." Freſh de-

vils, thought I: I'm ſure I have no occaſion for her *Caſtleton* air. Could ſhe not have thought of a more proper companion than me to ſpend two or three months with her? There's couſin *Polly*, one of the beſt, I believe, of the old maiden tribe: ſhe would have thought herſelf much obliged to have been invited—Beſides, it would have been doing good to have aſked her, as her circumſtances, you have often heard me regret, are but indifferent; nor is ſhe bleſſed with a good ſtate of health, though, good creature! ſhe never repines. Had ſhe ſent for her, I ſay, *Nancy*, *ſhe* might have been the better for *Caſtleton* air. But this was only in thought; for, you know, I never dare venture to contradict my father, when he ſeems ſet upon a thing. And, to ſay the truth, it was an after-thought; for I was ſo

ſtupid

ſtupid at the time, I could neither think nor ſpeak. I muttered out, at laſt, "And pray, ſir, when do you in-"tend I ſhall go?" "To-morrow," ſaid he; "there is a *retour* coach goes "within five miles of *Caſtleton*. So "your couſin *Betſy*, I hope, will ſtay "with you all day, and help you to "make ready. We ſhall ſet out by "ſix in the morning. Here are "twenty guineas for you. I ſuppoſe "you'll want a new puff, or ſome "other gew-gaw." "I believe, "ſir," ſaid I, very gravely, "I ſhall "have little occaſion for any at my "aunt's. Beſides, I cannot poſſibly "get them ready in ſo ſhort a time." My father looked a little angry: ſaid, he expected I would have obeyed him with a little more good humour; that he would engage, the miſſes, the milliners, could furniſh me with fop-

peries for all my money, in leſs time than he could croſs the ſquare. I made no anſwer. My father went out of the room, and I then gave my paſſion full vent by a flood of tears. And can you blame me, *Nancy?* I, that never, I may ſay, in my life, met with a greater diſappointment, than, perhaps, not dancing ſo ſoon at a ball as I thought I had a title to?

My mother, you know, died before I could be ſenſible of my loſs. Both you and I were great favourites at the boarding-ſchool; and, ſince I came home, my father has been ſo indulgent to me, that I have ſcarce had any thing to wiſh for. He always ſeemed averſe to my going too often to public places, and never would allow me, but with proper company. This my own reaſon approved of; and beſides, I always agreed with

with you, that to be often ſeen, is not to be long admired. I begin to be ſerious; but, don't you think, *Nancy*, I have reaſon?

My father, I told you, was no ſooner gone, than I burſt into tears. My couſin *Betſy* ſaid, ſhe thought I had no reaſon to be ſo vexed, if it was only to ſtay a few months; but that ſhe could not underſtand, what made her uncle ſo ſudden in his reſolution: it was her opinion he had ſome other reaſon than merely an invitation from my aunt; and, indeed, my dear, I begin to think ſhe is certainly right. But I tire you with this long epiſtle. So, to be as ſhort as poſſible, I made very little preparation. *Betſy* ſtaid all day, and aſſiſted me in packing. I diſperſed ſeveral cards amongſt my acquaintance; and, I aſſure you, the

one to my *Nancy* was the firſt. At ſix o'clock, next morning, I was ready, took a tender farewell of *Betſy*, and, with an aching head and heart, ſtept into the coach.

We were no ſooner ſet off, than my father began to talk on indifferent ſubjects; but my heart was too full, and, in ſpite of all my endeavours, I was obliged to give way to my tears. My father, inſtead of being angry with me, took me kindly by the hand, and aſked me, what made me ſo uneaſy? That, if I did not chear up, he ſhould be aſhamed to take me to my aunt, who, no doubt, expected I would be as glad to ſee her, as ſhe would be to ſee me. I anſwered, "Indeed, ſir, I think, "myſelf, that I am very fooliſh, but "I can't help it: I hope, before I "reach my aunt's, I ſhall be able to

"behave

"behave otherwiſe; and though I "ſhould be uneaſy at your leaving "me, ſure ſhe will not take that "amiſs." "I hope not, *Clarinda*," ſaid he; "and I truſt entirely to "your ſenſe and diſcretion, to pleaſe "the old lady, who, I aſſure you, has "it in her power to make your viſit "of more conſequence than you "imagine."

By degrees I got up my ſpirits, and chatted tolerably well the reſt of the journey. As nothing material happened the whole way, I ſhall only tell you, the above-mentioned great dog gave notice of our arrival about two o'clock *Saturday* noon. The old lady immediately drew up the dining-room ſaſh, and called out, "Wel-"come, brother, to *Caſtleton*." The houſe-keeper, an antiquated dame, like herſelf, with her keys on her arm,

opened the great gate, and, in imitation of her lady, welcomed us to *Caſtleton*. "My lady," ſaid ſhe, "has waited dinner for you this "hour." "Lord!" ſaid I, looking at my watch as I went up ſtairs, "I'm certainly too ſlow; 'tis but "juſt two." "My lady, miſs, dines "always at one." Good lord! thought I, what time muſt ſhe breakfaſt, then!

Now, my dear, to give you a deſcription of my aunt *Nell*. She was dreſſed in an aſh-coloured ſattin night-gown, with ſtraight ſleeves that buttoned down to her wriſts; but, to make amends for covering ſo much beauty, her petticoats were ſo ſhort, that you might eaſily ſee one half of her legs, which, to do them juſtice, would not look amiſs, were it not for a large bone at the bottom of each ancle. At firſt, I took one of them

them for an excreſcence; but found I was miſtaken, when I ſaw they were exactly proportioned to each other. The heels of her ſhoes are ſo high, that one would imagine ſhe was ſet on ſtilts. They were flowered ſattin, with an orange ground, and her ſtockings orange ſilk, with purple clocks. Her apron was point lace, with frills of the ſame. On her head ſhe had a point cap, with plaits on plaits ſix ſtories high; and, above all, a long hood drawn through the cords of her ſtays. To compleat her dreſs, ſhe had an embroidered work-bag genteely hanging on one ſide of her, and a gold whiſtle, ſuſpended by a chain, on the other.

My aunt, I aſſure you, has been a fine woman. My father told me, ſhe had a vaſt many lovers in her youth; that there was a duel fought for

for her, and her favourite was killed: So, poor lady, ſhe reſolved, after that, to remain ſingle for life. She's of a gigantic ſtature, and her ſhoe heels do not a little aſſiſt to make her a moſt formidable figure. But to have done with a deſcription of her. After ſaluting my father, ſhe honoured me with the ſame compliment; and ſaid, her niece was really a very proper young woman, and hoped ſhe was as good as ſhe was handſome. (I am afraid not, madam, thought I.) We ſat down, and preſently appeared a good, old, reverend, grey-headed butler, with a ſalver and glaſſes. We then were a ſecond time welcomed to *Caſtleton*; and, after drinking a glaſs of wine, we were ſummoned, by the bell ringing, to dinner.

Now, my dear *Nancy*, were you in the leaſt an epicure, I ſhould ſet you longing

longing for part of this delicious entertainment. I aſſure you, my aunt ſeems to be a notable houſe-wife, and either ſhe, or her houſe-keeper, has a very genteel notion of placing things to advantage.

And now, to conclude this long epiſtle, I muſt acquaint you the principal way I intend to amuſe myſelf is, in writing to my dear *Nancy*, and in reading her letters, which, agreeable to her uſual goodneſs, I hope will be as full and particular as poſſible. My father leaves us to-morrow; and I was reſolved he ſhould not go without a letter to you. 'Tis now near two o'clock in the morning. I was with my father and my aunt, till eleven; but I hope ſhe won't oblige me always to be at her elbow. I have got a neat dreſſing-room: it commands a very extenſive proſpect,

and

and has many fine ſeats in view. If the old lady ſhould prove any thing ſociable, and will introduce me to the company within ſight of her, I ſhall be happy enough; but that, I dare ſay, I can have no reaſon to expect.

Pray, my dear, offer my beſt reſpects to your good mother, and *Polly*. Remember me to Miſs *Wright*, Miſs *Simper*, Miſs *Lloyd*, and *Sally Weſt*: and forget not to offer my compliments, when you ſee them, to Sir *Rory*, Capt. *Puzzle*, *Bob Frolic*, and, in ſhort, to all thoſe, whoſe company we have ſpent many an agreeable hour in. Write to me, my dear, directly, on the receipt of this, and believe me to be,

Your ſincere friend,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

May 15.

I HAD the favour of my dear *Nancy's* agreeable letter. You rally me a little ſeverely on my tragi-comic epiſtle, as you call it. But very prettily put me in mind, that I muſt not expect to paſs through this world of ſorrow, without taſting ſome of the bitters as well as ſweets of life. Well, God ſend me, my dear, no more of the bitter than what ſerves to give a reliſh to the ſweets! and what I have hitherto experienced is no more. For, would you think it, my dear *Nancy?* I have been but three days here, and am not only reconciled to my ſituation, but

am

am perfectly in love with it. But now I know you will ſay, I'm always in extremes; yet am I reſolved to tell you every thing that paſſes, and all my thoughts, without the leaſt apprehenſion of your good-natured rebuke.

I aroſe, on *Sunday* morning, by ſeven, to ſee my father before he left us. I don't know how it was, but I think my heart preſaged, that I ſhould ſpend my time much more agreeably than I at firſt expected. I went chearfully to my father, and told him, I was in hopes of being very happy. He took me by the hand, and ſaid, "Well, *Clarinda*, it "gives me great pleaſure to ſee you "look ſo contented; and, to ſhew "you what a good opinion I have of "your ſenſe and diſcretion, I will "let you into the ſecret, why I am

"ſo

" ſo anxious for your ſpending two
" or three months here. You know,
" my dear, the obligations I lie un-
" der to Sir *George Evergreen.* His
" lady has honoured you with her
" particular notice. I believe ſhe is
" very good in the main; but, for
" a woman of her years, in my opi-
" nion, ſhe is rather too gay. I was
" beginning to be very uneaſy at the
" frequent parties of pleaſure ſhe was
" engaging you in. You know, my
" dear, I am far from being able to
" give you a large fortune; yet I
" hope I can provide for you gen-
" teely enough; I mean, ſo as to en-
" title you to a gentleman of mode-
" rate fortune, who has ſenſe to chuſe
" a wife that can be happy, though
" not continually in the midſt of
" routs and drums. As cuſtom, *Cla-*
" *rinda*, for the moſt part, becomes

" a ſecond

" a ſecond nature, I was afraid, that
" before Sir *George* and his lady ſail
" for the *Weſt Indies*, which, you
" know, is to be in *Auguſt*, my dear
" girl would be intirely ſpoiled for
" making an honeſt, ſenſible man
" happy: or in caſe, *Clarinda*, you
" ſhould never be married, which
" is many a pretty woman's lot, what
" a ſtill more deſpicable figure would
" you cut in your old age, if you
" could only reliſh ſuch a life as her
" ladyſhip's? My reaſon for giving
" you ſuch ſhort notice of your jour-
" ney was, that I did not know how
" far you were to be truſted; and
" had I told you of your going, with-
" out my reaſons, Lady *Evergreen*, I
" was afraid, would have been em-
" ployed to intercede for you; and
" then, to avoid appearing both un-
" grateful and unpolite, I ſhould have

" been

" been obliged to yield to her ſolici-
" tation. I was willing, my dear,
" you ſhould find your ſituation bet-
" ter than you expected; ſo ſaid
" very little in favour of your aunt,
" whom, I believe, though you don't
" ſee her a modern fine lady, you
" will find, what is much better, a
" good-natured woman. She was
" particularly fond of your mother,
" who was her youngeſt ſiſter. She
" was the eldeſt of three, and was
" left, by her father, heireſs of *Caſtle-*
" *ton*, he having no ſons. Your aunt,
" Mrs. *Blackmore*, was the ſecond. She
" died about three months after her
" huſband, and left an only ſon ill
" provided for, otherwiſe than in a
" good education. Your aunt *Nell*,
" as it is very reaſonable, intends this
" young gentleman to be her heir.
" As he was inclined to go into the

" army,

"army, ſhe purchaſed him a com-
"miſſion. He has been abroad theſe
"three years, and very often draws
"on her for money; yet, in ſpite
"of this, your aunt has a conſi-
"derable ſum in my hands, which
"ſhe encreaſes every year; and, as
"you are the daughter of her favou-
"rite ſiſter, if you behave well, it is
"probable ſhe will leave you part of
"her wealth. She has promiſed to
"to introduce you to ſeveral families
"in the neighbourhood, and any
"thing you may want, I have deſired
"her to provide for you." Was ever girl, my dear *Nancy*, bleſſed with a better father? Sure I ſhould be the worſt creature in the world, if I did not love and revere him.

At eight o'clock the bell rang for prayers. We were all convened (not a ſervant dare be miſſing, unleſs a ſa-

tisfactory

tisfactory reaſon can be given) in a ſort of chapel, which, in days of old, has been very grand. It is hung with crimſon velvet, the cuſhions, &c. of the ſame, and ornamented with a gold fringe. The gold is much tarniſhed, but the antiquity of it, my father ſays, makes it much more grand than if it were quite new. It has a delightful echo, and, as my aunt's domeſtics are all grown old in her ſervice, I ſuppoſe the antiquity of their voices adds to the grandeur of the concert. But what a giddy girl am I, that, even in my moſt ſerious moments, can think and write ſo lightly? But don't ſcold me, *Nancy*; remember, I own my fault, and, I give you my word, I'll try to amend. Well, my dear, the good old chaplain (who, I believe, I did not mention before) read prayers; and, after

ſinging

ſinging an anthem, the little congregation were all diſmiſſed to their reſpective apartments, where, it is to be ſuppoſed, (as they did not make their appearance for half an hour after) they were at their private devotion. The whole did not take up a full hour; for, preciſely at nine, we were ſummoned to breakfaſt. After breakfaſt my father took his leave, but not without a rebuke from my aunt, for travelling on a *Sunday*. He told her, he was far from approving of people making a practice of it, who had plenty of time to go where they pleaſed any day, but that particular buſineſs obliged him at preſent; upon which my aunt ſeemed very well ſatisfied.

After he was gone, ſhe deſired me to dreſs for church. As I made no doubt there would be a genteel congregation,

gregation, I was reſolved to dreſs very ſmart, though, at the ſame time, not too gay. I put on my new pink and white *French* ſack, a ſuit of ſoiled blonds, a huge blond cap, a pale pink ruff, a pair of clean *French* gloves, and my white ſarcenet cardinal and hat. I really believe the air has an effect on my complexion already. I was ſo pleaſed with myſelf, that I could not help giving you the particulars of my dreſs. The church is only about a quarter of a mile from *Caſtleton.* My aunt and I went in her chariot. I was much diſappointed as to the company. The principal ſeats were moſtly filled with ſervants. There were only three or four gentlemen's families, who generally reſide in the country the whole year; but my aunt ſays, in two or three weeks time all the noblemen

and gentlemen will be come to their ſeats, and that moſt of them attend the church very regularly, Mr. *Wilks*, their parſon, being much eſteemed amongſt them.

I underſtand the family my aunt is moſt intimate with, is Sir *William Renton's*. They were all at church. They ſeem to be a pretty family, though I had not ſo near a view of the young ladies as to be quite a judge. There are of the family at home, Sir *William*, his lady, and four daughters. The eldeſt (my aunt ſays) was a celebrated beauty. She is married to Sir *Charles Cheſter*, who has a commiſſion in the army, and is at preſent abroad. Lady *Cheſter* ſpends the ſummer at *Renton Park*. There are two ſons of the family: the eldeſt is abroad on his travels, and expected ſoon home; the youngeſt has

has a company in the regiment Sir *Charles* commands. I am the more particular about this family, becauſe I am ſoon to be made acquainted with them, and my aunt ſpeaks highly in their praiſe. Sir *William* and Lady *Renton* paid their compliments to my aunt as we came out of church; and ſaid, they were extremely glad to ſee ſhe had got her niece with her; and, in a familiar way, added, they deſigned to pay her a family viſit this week, and to make their young folks and me acquainted. Sir *William* handed us to our chariot, and ſaid, he would provide me a huſband before I left the country, if I would come often and ſee him at *Renton Park.*

I will conclude this letter, my dear *Nancy*, as I have an opportunity of ſending it by our ſteward's ſon, who

is now going to ſet off for *London*. We are a great way from a poſt town. I won't take up time with compliments, though honeſt *John* ſays, his ſon ſhall wait half an hour on my ladyſhip, notwithanding his buſineſs is very preſſing. Adieu. All happineſs attend you.

C. CATHCART.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

May 16.

I Concluded my laſt, my dear *Nancy*, with telling you we expected a viſit of Sir *William Renton's* family this week. They have not been here yet; but my aunt received a card this

this day, informing her, if it was convenient, they would wait on her to-morrow.

There has not any thing material happened ſince my laſt. I am ſurpriſed at myſelf, in having come ſo eaſily into my aunt's early hours. I am always at chapel with the firſt every morning. After breakfaſt I ſit with my aunt flowering a muſlin apron, which ſhe greatly admires. I told her, this morning, ſhe would make me very happy, if ſhe would accept of it when it was finiſhed. She thanked me, ſeemed vaſtly pleaſed, and ſaid, ſhe ſhould be very proud of her niece's handy work. At twelve I retire to my dreſſing-room, and am always ready to ſkip down ſtairs at the firſt toll of the dinner bell.

The chaplain is a very converſible, good-natured man. He has been in

the family ever ſince my aunt took poſſeſſion of *Caſtleton*, which is above thirty years. We chat over our glaſſes about an hour after dinner, and then I withdraw. The other day I told my aunt I had many acquaintances which I wiſhed to keep up, and if ſhe had no objection, I ſhould chuſe to ſpend an hour or two in writing to them ſometimes. "By all means, "*Clarinda*," ſaid ſhe, "don't confine "yourſelf with me; you know I am "uſed to ſitting much alone; ſo pray "amuſe yourſelf as you think beſt." Accordingly, as ſoon as the glaſſes are removed, I make my exit, as I told you.

I have wrote a letter of compliment to Lady *Evergreen*, regretting my being obliged to leave *London* without ſeeing her. I have likewiſe wrote ſeveral other ſhort epiſtles, to which I expect

pect as ſhort anſwers. So what with theſe, and writing ſo much to you, I have not had a moment to ſpare. My aunt has juſt now ſent to aſk me to a game at piquet; ſo adieu for the preſent.

Thurſday, 12 o'clock.

I am already dreſſed for our company. My aunt being buſy, conſulting with her houſe-keeper, I thought I would dreſs, and then ſit down and make up for my not writing laſt night after ſupper, which I generally do; but, I don't know how it happened; I was quite ſtupid and lazy; ſo went to bed as ſoon as I came up ſtairs. I can't ſay I'm much better to-day, which is very unlucky, when we expect ſo much company.

My aunt and I are extremely gracious. She took me into her ward-

robe, yeſterday, and ſhewed me all her fineries. What a number of ſuits of cloaths! the worſt of which are ſcarcely ſoiled. She has two very handſome embroidered ſilks; the one a pale blue and ſilver, the other a purple and gold. They are ſo nicely papered, and cottoned up, that, tho' they have lain by theſe twenty years, they look as well as if they were juſt come out of the mercer's ſhop. "You may ſuppoſe, *Clarinda*," ſaid ſhe, "I ſhall never wear any of theſe "fine cloaths. I intend to give one "of theſe rich ſilks to my God-"daughter, *Nelly Renton*, who is to "ſpend the next winter in *London*. "You ſhall have the other; and as "you are my niece, and, I think, a "very good girl, I will give you the "choice."

Don't

Don't you congratulate me, my dear *Nancy*, on being ſo much in favour? I thanked her, and ſaid, I ſhould have ſome difficulty in making a choice, ſince they were both ſo handſome. I begin to like her greatly. This morning at breakfaſt, ſhe ſaid ſhe would give me a ſuit of laces to my gown, which ſhe had not ſhewed me. Shall I not be vaſtly fine againſt next winter? I fancy my father will think my aunt is likely to give me a higher taſte for dreſs than Lady *Evergreen.*—The *Renton* family, I find, are well acquainted with my aunt's early hours. I ſee their coach coming up the avenue, and muſt therefore lay down my pen.

Friday, 3 *o'clock.*

What a happy creature will your *Clarinda* be this ſummer! I am ſo de-

lighted with this charming family, that I have not patience to give you a deſcription of them at leiſure. I would have you, my dear *Nancy*, acquainted with them all at once, and admire them as much as I do; but, as that is impoſſible, I will be as particular as I can. When I went down ſtairs, they were alighting from their coach. There were only Sir *William*, Lady *Renton*, Miſs *Renton*, and my aunt's God-daughter, Miſs *Nelly*. After the uſual compliments, my aunt ſaid, ſhe expected to have had the pleaſure of Lady *Cheſter's* company, and Miſs *Fanny's*. "Why," ſaid Sir *William*, "you won't, I ſuppoſe, be "long deprived of that pleaſure; but "you women, Lady *Cathcart*, take up "ſo much time in adjuſting your "flounces and furbelows, that a man "had need have the patience of *Job*

"to

" to be obliged to wait for you. " O ho!" added he, looking out at the window, " there they come, driving " away, jehu like! no mercy on the " poor horſes."

I ran down ſtairs, and met two of the prettieſt creatures I ever ſaw in my life. But I will deſcribe them in their proper place; and muſt, therefore begin with Sir *William.*

He is, I ſuppoſe, betwixt forty and fifty, of a good middle ſize, an open countenance, and looks as freſh and healthy as if he were not above five and twenty. He was dreſſed in dark brown and gold. No one could imagine it poſſible for him to be a grandfather; yet, it ſeems, it is two years ſince Lady *Cheſter* made him ſuch. It is three years ſince her ladyſhip was married, and Sir *Charles* has been moſt of that time abroad. She was

delivered of a daughter in his abſence, and loſt her in two months after, by the ſmall pox. What a ſad thing is it, *Nancy*, to be no ſooner married to a man, than to be obliged to part with him! Lady *Cheſter*, it ſeems, was very deſirous to go with Sir *Charles*, but was not thought to be in a proper condition for travelling. My aunt ſays, if the regiment is not ordered home this ſummer, her ladyſhip intends to go to him next ſpring. —You'll pardon this digreſſion.

Lady *Renton* is only a year younger than Sir *William*. She is tall, and ſurpriſingly genteel, for a mother of ſo many children. Her face is extremely agreeable, but even in her youth could not be beautiful. She has good dark eyes and hair, but is very much pitted with the ſmall pox. Her mouth and noſe are neither remarkably

markably good nor otherwiſe. Her ſkin is quite clear, and free from wrinkles. My aunt ſays, it is owing to her living cloſe in the country, and her having a good natural temper, which has been little ruffled with croſſes. She enjoys a good ſtate of health, and has an excellent huſband. They live always within their income, and have a delightful family of children. Happy Lady *Renton!* for by this account you have taſted all the ſweets without any of the bitters of life. She was dreſſed in an aſh-coloured tabby ſack, (which ſeems to be a prevailing colour here amongſt the old ladies) a ſuit of very fine *Bruſſels* lace, a neat round cap, with a black lace hood and handkerchief of the ſame, above a white one. Though not gaily dreſſed, ſhe looked quite genteel; and one may plainly ſee, by the eaſe

eaſe in her manner, that ſhe has always been amongſt the beſt company.

Lady *Cheſter* is of a tolerable good ſize, though the leaſt of the family. She is exactly proportioned; her hair a ſhining black, a pair of fine ſprightly black eyes, her noſe a little inclined to the *Roman*, a pretty mouth, a good ſet of teeth, and a moſt delicate complexion. Lady *Cheſter* certainly, in moſt people's eyes, will paſs for a compleat beauty; yet I can't help giving the preference to the charming *Fanny*. Her ladyſhip was dreſſed in a garnet ſack, with a white flower, a ſuit of very handſome joining blond, a cap, with garnet ribbons, a *chevreux de friſe* lappet and under her chin a garnet ruff, and the queen's cloak of black lace.

Miſs *Renton* would be reckoned handſome, if not in company with her

her ſiſter: She has a very fine perſon, blue lively eyes, fair hair, and a good open countenance. She was dreſſed in a blue ſattin ſack, and the reſt of her dreſs the ſame as Lady *Cheſter's*. And now let me deſcribe my favourite *Fanny*, who wants but two or three months of nineteen. She is rather tall than otherwiſe; her ſhoulders have ſo fine a fall, that one would imagine it almoſt impoſſible to hang a gown on them; her ſhape ſlender, though not too thin; and her hair the fineſt nut brown I ever ſaw. Her eyes are dark, and expreſſive of ſo much ſweetneſs, modeſty, and ſenſibility, that one cannot but conclude the purity of her thoughts, and the goodneſs of her heart, animate her features, which are all regular, and, I may ſay, exquiſitely pretty. Her teeth are ivory, and her lips carnation.

tion. Her ſkin is not ſo white as Lady *Cheſter's*, yet perfectly clear and fine. The red in her cheeks is pale, and, at a little diſtance, can ſcarce be diſcerned. But when her colour is raiſed by the air, or heat, you would think it added to her beauty; though, when pale, had ſhe more colour, you would think it would rather be a diſadvantage. Thus does ſhe always look quite charming. Her air is inexpreſſibly grand, and without the leaſt affectation. You know, *Nancy*, you and I uſed to think that impoſſible; but a ſight of Miſs *Fanny Renton* will, I dare ſay, convince you, as well as it has me, of your miſtake. I imagine the girl is in love. I obſerved her to ſigh frequently. Though ſhe is quite chearful, yet has ſhe a kind of look, which I imagine to be the effect of that paſſion. Do you know,

Nancy,

Nancy, I have been trying to practiſe it in my glaſs, and that for the life of me, I can't hit it? I uſed to think I was excellent at catching a pretty air even of the features; but this, I fancy, is inimitable, without feeling the paſſion. She was dreſſed in a laylock luſtring, with a purple and pea-green flower, a ſuit of plain blond net, and a queen's cloak of the ſame. She had nothing on her head, except a ſprig of flowers on one ſide. Sir *William* inſiſted on his daughter being dreſſed without a cap. Lady *Cheſter* and Miſs *Renton* never wore any till they were near twenty; at leaſt when they were in the country with Sir *William*. I have before taken notice of her having very fine hair: it was dreſſed in a plain high toupée; and, though I am ſo fond of the hair done in the *French* taſte, I could not help thinking

thinking ſhe looked a thouſand times genteeler than we *frenchified* belles. About her neck was a black velvet collar, and, with no other ornaments than thoſe I have mentioned, I am certain ſhe would outſhine a whole circle of celebrated *London* beauties.

I now come to the youngeſt of this amiable family, She is a tall, overgrown girl; her features regular and ſweet, her hair and complexion quite fair, and her eyes pretty enough. I can't help ſmiling at the thoughts of her appearing, next winter, in my aunt's embroidered ſilk. I muſt certainly have the old lady told to keep it till miſs's bones are a little better knit, or the weight of it will bear her down. She was in a green luſtring ſtay coat, as ſhort as my aunt's petticoats. Sir *William* ſays, if ſhe grows as much next year as ſhe has done this, he intends

tends to make money of her, by advertiſing, "A wonderful tall girl "to be ſeen at *Renton Park.*" "Why, "ſir," ſaid ſhe, "you had better "carry me to town. "True, child," ſaid he; "I was laying my account "to be at ſome expence with you "next winter. Now I think on it, "I ſhall make you turn out to my "advantage. What ſay you, Miſs "*Cathcart?* Will you bring all your "acquaintance to ſee my wonderful "tall girl?" "That you may be "certain, Sir *William,*" ſaid I, "if "you don't ſet too high a price on "the ſight." She is a great favourite of Sir *William's.* My lady ſays, if ſhe were not naturally a good girl, Sir *William* would entirely ſpoil her. Her hair reaches down to her middle: it is tied behind with a black ribbon, cut ſhort before, and combed over her

her forehead, which gives her a pretty wild look. Sir *William* often calls her *his wild filly*.

I have now given the picture of this charming family at full length. let me know, in your next, how you like it; though you can't be a competent judge, till you ſee the originals, whether I have done them juſtice or not. Well, my dear, after dinner, Lady *Cheſter*, and all we young folks, took a walk round the encloſures of *Caſtleton*. It is really a pretty romantic place; a great deal of wood and water; but I have no genius for painting landſcapes, therefore will not attempt it. Lady *Cheſter* and Miſs *Renton* are both very frank, and ſeem to have a good deal of humour. They told me, they ſhould take it much amiſs, if I did not come often to *Renton Park*: that they hoped

to

to be very happy this ſummer; that they expected their brother *Harry* home, which would, probably, bring a great deal of company to the houſe; and that their father had promiſed to give them a ball the week after their brother's arrival, and have all the neighbouring gentry invited. You may believe I was not backward in promiſing to make one of the company, as I now know my aunt well enough to be certain ſhe would not be againſt it. Beſides, do you know, the old lady hinted to me, this morning, that ſhe wiſhed I could make a conqueſt of Mr. *Renton*. My aunt, I ſee, is a great friend to matrimony, though ſhe has refuſed ſo many offers herſelf. I ſaid, the younger brothers were always the prettieſt fellows; and that I wiſhed ſhe would ſpeak a good word for me to the captain. "So you

"think,"

"think," says she, "that Lady *Che-*
"*ster* is much happier, in having her
"husband abroad in the wars, than
"Lady *Renton* with her husband al-
"ways at home?" "No," said I,
"but I should like, of all things, to
"go with my husband, and see the
"world; to have him honoured for
"his bravery, be useful to his king
"and country, and rewarded accord-
"ingly." "You are young, *Cla-*
"*rinda*," said my aunt, "and full of
"spirit; but, believe me, there is not
"a woman that is married to an
"officer, and has a real affection for
"him, but would willingly give up
"the honour, for the pleasure of hav-
"ing her husband a private gentle-
"man." And, indeed, *Nancy*, when I begin to consider, I believe she is certainly in the right.

We

We walked till tea-time. After tea, Sir *William*, Lady *Renton*, Lady *Cheſter*, and my aunt, played at whiſt. The reſt of us, with the honeſt chaplain, played at loo. We ſupped at nine. After ſupper, Sir *William* entertained us with merry catches, and made his girls ſing ſeveral very fine airs, in ſome of which I joined them. My aunt made me ſing "the flowers "of the foreſt;" and Sir *William* was ſo delighted with it, that he encored it three times, and made me promiſe that I would teach his girls to ſing it. My favourite *Fanny* has a voice like an angel; and, Sir *William* ſays, touches the harpſichord (which, unluckily, happened to be out of tune) to perfection. My aunt told Sir *William*, that I played little inferior to Miſs *Fanny*. He took her promiſe, that ſhe would ſend me frequently to

his

his concert. She, ſaid ſhe ſhould be extremely happy to have me often in ſuch agreeable company. You may believe I was not mute on the occaſion. They ſtaid till half an hour after eleven, and, before they went away, made my aunt promiſe, that we ſhould ſpend the day with them on *Saturday*.

What a deal I have ſcribbled! My eyes begin to turn dim: two o'clock, upon my honour! Adieu! Pleaſant dreams to my *Nancy*, and to

Her faithful friend,

C. CATHCART.

Miſs

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

May 31.

A Fortnight paſt, and I have not wrote a word, in all that time, to my dear *Nancy!* I had the favour of yours, but am very angry at your ſuppoſing me capable of neglecting you, on my being ſo much taken up with my new acquaintance. No, my dear, you ſhall always partake of what happineſs I enjoy, as far as it lies in my power. I am perſuaded, however, you have too much good ſenſe not to know, that we may ſometimes have ſo many engagements on our hands, as not to be able to keep up ſo regular a correſpondence as we could wiſh. You will ſee, by the encloſed, that I had it ready long ago, but wanted

a proper opportunity to ſend it off. This laſt fortnight I have not had a moment's time to write to you. I have been, as you ſuppoſe, with the Miſs *Rentons*; though not ſo taken up with *Fanny*, who is turned one of my boſom friends, as to make me think the leſs of my *Nancy*. No, my dear, like a true woman, I have now ſat down to give you all my ſecrets. You, I ſuppoſe, will communicate them to one of your friends, who will tell them to a third friend; till, in the end, perhaps, ſome girl, who is wiſer than the reſt, with a little addition of her own, will diſpoſe of them to a bookſeller. But, to be ſerious, *Nancy*; I believe our ſex can keep a ſecret, if an important one, as well as the men. I have no fear of you, and, to convince you, that I am not guilty of a breach of truſt, I muſt

acquaint

acquaint you, that the dear creature has given me liberty to write you every thing that relates to her. I have told her of our long intimacy, and have made her ſo well acquainted with your character, that ſhe longs to ſee you.

Agreeable to the propoſal, which I mentioned to you, my aunt and I went and paſſed the day at *Renton Park* on *Saturday*; but, as I have now ſo much matter on hand, I muſt not be too particular. Suffice it, then, to ſay, it is a fine houſe, quite in the modern taſte, the improvements, and every thing about it, anſwerable to the good taſte of the owner. There were at dinner Lord *Elmor*, a young nobleman between twenty and thirty, very agreeable, though not handſome; one 'Squire *Fox*, his lady, and three daughters, as roſy and freſh as milk-

maids. I could eaſily ſee, by the looks of my lord, that he is an admirer of Miſs *Fanny*; and I could not help thinking ſhe betrayed a little conſciouſneſs of it all the time he was with us. None of the company ſtaid ſupper, except my aunt and me. But I forgot to tell you, that, while Lady *Cheſter* and Miſs *Renton* were talking to the Miſs *Fox's*, *Fanny* and I were entertaining one another with a *tête à tête*, at the other end of the room. (The gentlemen were all gone out with Sir *William*, to ſee ſome new improvements he had made in the ſtable-yard.) In this converſation we were ſo pleaſed with each other, that we engaged to meet, every evening, between *Renton Park* and *Caſtleton*, to have a private walk. This we have accordingly done for ſome time; and are, conſequently, as I have told you, very intimate. One

One evening, as uſual, I went out to meet her. On coming to the place appointed, I ſaw her at a diſtance, and a young gentleman in company with her. I concluded it was Lord *Elmor*; but could not be certain at that diſtance: and, as ſoon as they perceived me, he left her. When ſhe came up, I aſked her, in a jocular manner, why ſhe had not brought her ſwain with her? She anſwered, in the ſame pleaſant way, that the men were naturally ſo inconſtant, and I was miſtreſs of ſo many charms, that ſhe was afraid to truſt her ſwain with a ſight of me. "I imagine," ſaid I, "you have already run that riſk; for "I am greatly miſtaken, if the gen- "tleman, that now left you, was any "other than Lord *Elmor*. Come, "my dear *Fanny*, our private walks "will turn quite inſipid, if we don't

" fall into our favourite ſubject, love.
" I could ſee, with half an eye, that
" Lord *Elmor* is one of your humble
" ſervants; you muſt, my dear, tell
" me all about him." " Why," ſaid
ſhe, " *Clarinda*, to tell you the truth,
" ſince the firſt time I had the plea-
" ſure of ſeeing you, I intended, (if,
" upon a more intimate acquaintance,
" I found you anſwered the idea I had
" conceived of your good nature) to
" truſt you with what, my dear,
" (though I am ſeemingly eaſy) makes
" me very unhappy." Here the dear creature burſt into tears, and, without knowing her reaſon, I could not command mine, but readily mingled them with hers. We walked to the foot of a green hill, where we both ſat down. I aſſured her of my friendſhip and good wiſhes, promiſed her the moſt inviolable ſecreſy, and begged ſhe would

would compoſe herſelf, which ſhe did, and then began.

"It is very true, *Clarinda*, Lord "*Elmor* has paid his addreſſes to me. "He had the encouragement of all "my friends, and, I muſt ſay, I could "have no reaſonable objection to "him, were not my heart otherwiſe "engaged. My parents are extremely "good to me, and will not force my "inclinations; but their goodneſs "vexes me the more, as it is not in my "power to conſent to what they have "ſo much at heart. If the gentle-"man I prefer had but a moderate "fortune, my mother ſays, ſhe could "excuſe me; but, alas! *Clarinda*, "ſhe adds, what is too true, Mr. *Hope* "(that is his name) is not worth a "ſhilling. His father had a good "eſtate in this country, but lived ſo "high, and aſſiſted ſo many poor re-

" lations, that, before any one had " the leaſt notion of ſuch an event, " he was obliged to take refuge " within the verge of the court. The " ſon was left, at their ſeat in the " country, in the utmoſt diſtreſs. " However, the creditors behaved " ſo generouſly, that though, when " every thing was diſpoſed of, (you " may imagine to great diſadvantage) " and they could ſcarce make five " ſhillings in the pound, they made " a compoſition, and left him about " 500 *l.* The principal creditor, tho' " a gentleman of ſmall fortune, took " *Tommy*, who was their only child, " and promiſed to educate him with " his own ſon. By intereſt, Mr. *Hope* " got a commiſſion in one of the co- " lonies abroad; and he and his wife " left *England*, with the hopes of " making a fortune, and returning,

" in

" in ſome years, to ſhew their grati-
" tude to thoſe, who had ſo gene-
" rouſly befriended them in their di-
" ſtreſs. With many tears they parted
" with *Tommy*, recommending him to
" the protection of heaven, and to
" the good Mr. *Friendly*, till their re-
" turn. But, alas! my dear *Clarinda*,
" the ſhip they went in, two or three
" weeks after ſhe ſailed, was caſt
" away, and not a ſingle creature
" ſaved; ſo that poor *Tommy*, when
" he was entering his eighth year,
" was left an orphan." Here the tears, for ſome minutes, hindered her from proceeding. At laſt, however, recovering herſelf, ſhe thus went on:

" Mr. *Friendly* has, all along, be-
" haved to him like a father; nor did
" he ever make the leaſt diſtinction
" between him and his own ſon. His
" family and ours have always been

" very intimate; ſo that *Tommy* was
" ſeldom from *Renton Park* for two
" days together. *Bob Friendly* and
" he uſed ſometimes to ſpend eight
" or ten days with us, before my
" brother went abroad. I don't
" know, my dear *Clarinda*, how it
" was — at that time I had no notion
" of love; yet, I remember I uſed
" always to feel my heart beat with
" joy, whenever I ſaw *Bob Friendly*
" and *Tommy*; and they both fre-
" quently preſented me with little
" gifts, ſuch as a noſegay, or a bird.
" My father was greatly pleaſed at
" the growing friendſhip between my
" brothers and theſe two young gen-
" tlemen. *Bob Friendly*, he would
" often ſay to any gentleman who
" took notice of them at our houſe,
" is the ſon of a worthy neighbour,
" and that *Tommy*, who attracted their

" particular

" particular attention, was one of the
" moſt promiſing boys in the country:
" that he was under the guardianſhip
" of *Bob's* father, the good Mr.
" *Friendly*; but never mentioned his
" being an orphan. My father well
" knew, that the generality of people
" are apt to overlook the merit of
" an humble dependant. *Tommy* had
" never experienced any uneaſineſs
" on that account. He enjoyed the
" preſent happineſs, regardleſs, by
" reaſon of his tender years, of what
" might happen for the future. My
" father and mother excepted, not
" one of our family knew any thing
" of his being an orphan. As little
" quarrels are frequent among chil-
" dren, they avoided talking of it be-
" fore us, leſt (as might have been
" the caſe) he ſhould have met with
" inſults from his companions. But

" tire you, my dear *Clarinda*, with " trifles; and muſt, therefore, paſs " over the childiſh period, during which " I could give you a thouſand inſtances " of our growing and mutual af- " fection.

" When *Tommy* was about fifteen, " Mr. *Friendly* one day took him into " his cloſet, and, after telling him, he " was extremely well pleaſed with the " progreſs he had made in his ſtudies, " added, that he now wiſhed he would " think on what buſineſs or profeſſion " would beſt ſuit his inclination. " You know, my dear *Tommy*, ſaid he, " you have no fortune to depend on; " but this, though ſeemingly a loſs, " may, with your genius and a proper " application, turn out to your ad- " vantage. You may be always aſ- " ſured of my friendſhip and pro- " tection; and, whether you prefer

" divinity,

" divinity, law, or phyſick, I ſhall
" take care, that no part of educa-
" tion ſhall be wanting to make you
" compleat in the profeſſion you
" chuſe. Here *Tommy*, (as he hath
" ſince told me) unable to contain
" his emotion, threw himſelf at his
" benefactor's feet, and all he could
" utter was, Oh! my more than fa-
" ther! The generous Mr. *Friendly*
" was ſo affected (as he has told my
" father) with the gratitude and af-
" fection of the boy, that he could
" not ſupport it. While his heart
" was almoſt too big for utterance, he
" raiſed him, and, taking him in his
" arms, prayed that God Almighty
" might proſper him in every good
" intention; and that he might live
" to ſee him ſettled in a manner
" ſuitable to his wiſhes. He then
" deſired him to conſider of what he

" had

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" intention; and that he might live
" to ſee him ſettled in a manner
" ſuitable to his wiſhes. He then
" deſired him to conſider of what he

" had

" had ſaid, and left him to compoſe
" himſelf.

" *Tommy* now, for the firſt time, be-
" gan to look forward. He had often
" heard his companion *Bob* talk in
" raptures of the army; but then he
" recollected, that Mr. *Friendly* had
" not named it amongſt the profeſſi-
" ons which he would wiſh him to
" follow. Beſides, his own good ſenſe
" ſuggeſted, that, as he had no for-
" tune, and had often heard that a
" gentleman could not ſupport him-
" ſelf on a ſubaltern's pay, he was
" bound, by every motive of juſtice,
" gratitude, and honour, to embrace
" that kind of life, which, in all like-
" lihood, would the ſooneſt free him
" from the neceſſity of being any
" longer a burthen to the good Mr.
" *Friendly*. A younger ſon of a gen-
" tleman in the neighbourhood had,

" about

" about a month before, gone to " *London* to ſtudy phyſick. *Tommy* " had heard this youth ſay, that, as " ſoon as he had finiſhed his ſtudies, " he was to go abroad, where gentle- " men of his profeſſion generally " make their fortune. Induced, there- " fore, by this conſideration, he, at " laſt, fixed on this kind of life, and " took the firſt opportunity to inform " Mr. *Friendly* of his choice.

" That gentleman, about the ſame " time, took his ſon aſide, and told " him, that he would not wiſh him to " be an idle member of ſociety; that " he hoped he had given him ſuch an " education as might inſpire him with " ſome ambition to be uſeful to his " country; that the fortune he had " to depend on was moderate; and " that if he had the benevolent diſ- " poſition he wiſhed him to have, he

" would

" would often regret (as he, the fa-
" ther, had done) that it was ſo little
" in his power to be ſerviceable to
" others. But, ſaid he, *Bob*, if you
" take to a profeſſion, and heartily
" follow it, your fortune will ſo far
" be an advantage, that it will enable
" you to do good to many, without
" any other reward than what ſprings
" from the conſciouſneſs of doing a
" generous action. Yes, my dear
" *Bob*, you ought, and, I hope, will
" remember, that, *to whom much is*
" *given, of them much will be required.*
" *Bob* anſwered, that he hoped he
" ſhould always endeavour to imitate
" his example in private life; but
" that, if he had no objection, he
" would wiſh to ſerve his country by
" going into the army. Mr. *Friendly*
" was much diſappointed at his ſon's
" chuſing that profeſſion; yet would
" he,

" he, on no account, adviſe him " againſt it. He gave him a grave " lecture on the difference between " true and falſe courage, ſaid a great " deal in praiſe of the maſter he was " going to ſerve, and expreſſed his " hopes, that he would ſhew, by his " future behaviour, that his choice " had proceeded from a right prin- " ciple.

" In ſhort, my dear *Clarinda*, every " thing was prepared for the depar- " ture of the two youths. A lieu- " tenancy was immediately purchaſed " for *Bob*; and they both came to " *Renton Park* at the ſame time, and " took a tender farewell of our fa- " mily. We were all in tears; and " *Tommy*, when he took hold of my " hand, (as he has ſince told me) was " ready to ſink down. I was too " deeply affected myſelf, to obſerve

" his

" his emotion; and my mother and
" ſiſters being in tears, prevented
" them from thinking my concern
" extraordinary. During his abſence
" of four years, we often heard of
" the improvements of Mr. *Hope*:
" but when he returned, it is im-
" poſſible for you to imagine a more
" accompliſhed young gentleman.
" You will perhaps think, *Clarinda*,
" that he was ſo only in my eyes;
" but I aſſure you, it is nothing but
" the bare truth, when I declare, he
" was the admiration of all that ſaw
" him.

" Soon after his return to Mr.
" *Friendly's*, there was a ball at Lady
" *Pritchard's*, to which all the quality
" and gentry, for ſeveral miles round,
" were invited. Every gentleman
" was to have his partner engaged
" before the ball; ſo Mr. *Hope* came,

" and

" and engaged me. My father, my
" mother, and ſiſters went to it; and,
" indeed, it was a very brilliant aſ-
" ſembly. Mr. *Hope* was dreſſed in
" white and ſilver, and looked ſo
" handſome, that I was much taken
" notice of, that night, on his account.
" I never in my life remember to have
" been ſo happy. I could not help
" feeling a ſecret pleaſure at hearing
" it whiſpered, that we were the hand-
" ſomeſt pair in the aſſembly; ſo true
" is it, *Clarinda*, that pride and vanity
" are but too natural to our ſex.
" About the middle of the ball, Lord
" *Elmor*, and two other young noble-
" men, came in. They had been in-
" vited, but could not come ſo early
" as to engage partners. I had ſeen
" my lord at *Renton Park*, but was
" then ſo young, that I could not re-
" member him. My father and he

" were

" were very well acquainted; that is
" to ſay, they ſeemed to be ſo, when
" they met, which, indeed, was but
" ſeldom. My lord, as he was not
" taken up with any lady in parti-
" cular, walked round the room,
" viewing the company with his glaſs,
" paying his compliments to thoſe he
" knew, and, with regard to thoſe he
" knew not, and yet thought worthy
" of his notice, enquiring who ſuch
" a one, and ſuch a one was. I had
" the bad fortune to be one of the
" latter; for my lord no ſooner learned
" who I was, than he made up to my
" father, and aſked him, where he
" had, all this time, hid his angel of
" a daughter? My father anſwered,
" in his jocular way, that he kept
" her caged at *Renton Park*, and ne-
" ver, but upon extraordinary occa-
" ſions, gave her liberty. My lord
" ſhook

" ſhook hands with my father, and
" ſaid, He will be a happy man, Sir
" *William*, that can cage her for life.
" He then expreſſed his regret, that
" he had no partner, and aſked my
" father whether or not he thought
" mine would take it amiſs, if aſked
" the honour to dance a minuet with
" me? No, no, replied my father,
" I'll anſwer for Mr. *Hope*. Lady
" *Pritchard* being by, ſaid, ſhe would
" aſk the favour of Mr. *Hope*, and let
" me know it was Sir *William's* deſire.
" Accordingly ſhe came up with my
" lord, and, introducing him to us
" both, acquainted us with the favour
" his lordſhip had deſired her to aſk,
" adding, that ſhe would take it as a
" kindneſs done to herſelf, if we
" would oblige Lord *Elmor*. Mr.
" *Hope* very politely anſwered, that it
" would be very ſtrange in him to have

" any

"any objection to Miſs *Renton's* ob-
"liging her ladyſhip, and obeying
"her father. I gave his lordſhip
"my hand, and we danced a minuet.
"During the whole remaining part of
"the aſſembly, he ſcarce ever left
"me a moment. When I was danc-
"ing, he kept cloſe at my back;
"when I ſat down, Mr. *Hope* was on
"one ſide of me, and his lordſhip on
"the other. Mr. *Hope*, as he has ſince
"told me, turned very uneaſy, yet
"could he have no pretence to quar-
"rel with his lordſhip. As for my
"part, I had no notion of his unea-
"ſineſs, and was far from being diſ-
"pleaſed at the notice his lordſhip
"took of me. Before the ball broke
"up, he told my father that he might
"expect to ſee him ſoon at *Renton*
"*Park*; for that he ſhould long to
"ſee his bird in her cage. My father,

"you

" you may believe, anſwered him in
" kind; Lady *Pritchard* congratulated
" him and my mother on the con-
" queſt ſhe ſaw I had made; and,
" in two days time, before my lord
" made his firſt viſit, it was all over
" the country, that I was ſoon to be
" Lady *Elmor*. I was the only per-
" ſon that took it in jeſt.

" The report ſoon reached Mr.
" *Hope*, and came all at once, like a
" thunder-clap, upon him. He had
" been uneaſy at the ball, but had no
" apprehenſion that his lordſhip's gal-
" lantry proceeded from any other
" motive than a conſciouſneſs of his
" own wealth and dignity; and it
" piqued him not a little to be ob-
" liged to reſign his partner, even for
" the ſhort time of dancing a minuet.
" But the news of my being ſoon to
" be Lady *Elmor* rouſed him at once,

" and

" and made him thoroughly to com-
" prehend the ſituation of his own
" heart. Good God! ſaid he to him-
" ſelf, at what am I uneaſy? Had
" I ever any reaſon to think I could
" deſerve the amiable *Fanny Renton?*
" (We are all amiable, *Clarinda*, in the
" eyes of thoſe who love us) and can
" I be ſo mean as to be ſorry to hear
" of her going to be married ſuitably
" to her worth? No! It is the beſt
" news I have heard, ſince I came in-
" to the country; and I will be the
" firſt to congratulate her on her hap-
" pineſs. In this ſtate of mind he
" continued but a ſhort time, and
" then beat his breaſt, and cried, he
" was undone. Such was the agita-
" tion of his ſpirits, that, in two
" hours, it threw him into a fever;
" though, for ſome days, we did not
" hear of his illneſs at *Renton Park.*

" During

" During that time, my lord paid " his viſit, and aſked permiſſion of " my father to make his addreſſes to " me. Sir *William*, you may believe, " was extremely well pleaſed; for, " beſides his lordſhip's having a large " eſtate in poſſeſſion, he is next heir " to the duke of ——'s fortune, tho' " not to the Titles. My father ſaid, " he did him a great deal of honour, " and that nothing could give him " more pleaſure than to be nearly " allied to a family, that were " as conſpicuous for their goodneſs, " as for their rank. He told his " lordſhip I was very young, and, he " was almoſt certain, not pre-engaged; " ſo that if he could gain my affecti- " ons, which he had no doubt he " could, he would anſwer for the plea- " ſure it would give all the family. " You may ſuppoſe proper acknow-

" ledgments. In ſhort, *Clarinda*, that
" very day, after dinner, (as, it ſeems,
" it had been previouſly agreed) it
" was propoſed to take a walk on the
" terrace. His lordſhip, *Caroline*, and
" I went together: Sir *William*, and
" the reſt, ſaid they would follow.
" When we had walked once or twice
" along the terrace, *Caroline* pretended
" ſhe would go in, and ſee what it was
" that kept the reſt.

" All this time I had not the leaſt
" ſuſpicion of their deſign. She was
" no ſooner gone, than my lord pro-
" poſed to ſit down in an alcove, and
" taking my hand, and preſſing it to
" his lips, ſwore that, from the firſt mo-
" ment he ſaw me at Lady *Pritchard's*,
" he found his whole happineſs de-
" pended on my returning his affec-
" tion. Never, my dear *Clarinda*,
" was poor girl more abaſhed. I felt

" my

" my face all in a glow, nor could I
" open my lips to ſpeak one word.
" If ſilence be thought half a conſent,
" his lordſhip had no reaſon to deſpair.
" I continued unmoveable for ſome
" minutes; at laſt, recollecting the
" pretence *Caroline* had made to leave
" us, I ſaw it was a premeditated
" ſcheme; and therefore, pulling my
" hand from his lordſhip's, and, ſtill
" without ſpeaking, getting up, I
" made what haſte I could along the
" terrace, his lordſhip keeping pace
" with me, and repeating broken
" ſentences of happineſs and miſery,
" hope and deſpair, till we got into
" the houſe.

" I had no ſooner entered, than I
" hurried up to my dreſſing-room,
" faſtened the door, flung myſelf in a
" chair, and gave way to my emotion
" in a flood of tears. After this re-

" lief, I began to think with myſelf,
" that this perturbation proceeded
" rather from joy than grief; that I
" had juſt now got the offer of an
" agreeable young nobleman with a
" large eſtate; that I ſhould keep an
" equipage inferior to few; and that
" all my relations would be extremely
" happy to ſee me married even be-
" yond their moſt ſanguine expecta-
" tions. How little was I acquainted
" with my own heart! A thouſand
" notions of future grandeur crouded
" my imagination, nor did ever a
" thought of my dear Mr. *Hope* once
" enter my head. From theſe pleaſ-
" ing dreams I was awaked by *Caro-*
" *line's* tapping at the door, and de-
" ſiring me to come to my mother in
" her dreſſing-room. This meſſage
" threw me into greater confuſion,
" and I felt myſelf all in a tre-
" mor.

" mor. I replied, however, that I " would wait on her preſently, my " limbs, as I went, trembling under " me. I had got to the ſecond flat of " the ſtairs, when my mother's maid, " meeting me, ſaid, O Miſs, there is " bad news; poor Mr. *Hope* is at the " point of death! In a moment, *Cla-* " *rinda*, all my ſenſes forſook me, and " I fell down ſtairs in a ſwoon. The " family were immediately alarmed, " (Lord *Elmor* was ſtill in the houſe) " and I was carried to my bed quite " inſenſible. The occaſion of the " ſwoon was imputed to the fall; for " my head was very much bruiſed, " and Mrs. *Dawſon* was wiſe enough, " on her own account, not to let it " be known ſhe had any hand in the " accident; nor, indeed, could ſhe be " certain whether or not it might not " be owing to my miſſing a ſtep. The

" family were put in the utmoſt con-
" fuſion. Meſſengers were diſpatched,
" every way, for a phyſician. His
" lordſhip, in the greateſt diſtreſs,
" as I was told, mounted his horſe,
" and flew like lightning. He had
" the good fortune to meet Doctor
" *B*— in his way from Mr. *Friendly's*,
" and, of courſe, was the firſt that
" arrived with a phyſician. I was
" juſt beginning to breathe when they
" entered. The Doctor immediately
" bled me, and, after he had dreſſed
" my head, I came ſo perfectly to my
" ſenſes, that I imputed it all to a ſlip
" of my foot as I hurried down ſtairs
" to attend my mother. The Doctor
" recommended quietneſs: The cur-
" tains were therefore drawn, and I
" was left to my own reflections.

" None, my dear *Clarinda*, but
" thoſe who have been in ſuch a ſitu-
" ation,

" ation, can poſſibly conceive the pain
" I endured. The dear youth, for
" whom, from my infancy, I had cer-
" tainly a real affection, was, for what
" I knew, by that time, a breathleſs
" corſe. All the happy hours I had
" ſpent in his company crouded on
" my memory; the tears I had ſhed
" at parting, and the joy I felt at his
" return. My God! thought I to
" myſelf, is it poſſible I ſhall never
" more ſee him in this world? Shall I
" live, and enjoy pleaſure, and *Tommy*
" be no more? What are all the plea-
" ſures of this life? Are they not
" vain, fleeting, and tranſitory? Can
" youth, beauty, or health be enſured
" for a moment? How, in one ſingle
" inſtant, am I rendered incapable of
" reliſhing the grandeur, with which,
" I thought, I ſhould be ſo much de-
" lighted? Would I not rather, were

" it in my choice, wiſh that Mr. *Hope*
" ſhould live, than that I ſhould be
" the envy of my ſex? Happy choice!
" Would to God I could die for him,
" rather than live and be a burthen
" to myſelf! With theſe, and the like
" thoughts, was my mind employed
" till my mother came, and, ſoftly
" drawing aſide the curtains, aſked,
" if I was awake? On the ſight of
" her, I burſt into a flood of tears.
" She was terrified, and thought
" me in a fit. A phyſician being
" below, was immediately called
" up. He ſaid, I had a fever on
" my ſpirits; but that they need
" not be alarmed, for I was not in the
" leaſt danger, and had been more
" frightened than hurt. This, you
" may believe, gave them all great re-
" lief. My lord went home, but was
" continually ſending meſſengers to
" enquire how I did. " One

" One evening Mrs. *Dawſon* came
" up ſtairs; and my mother and ſiſters
" being out of the room, I ventured
" to enquire how ſhe got intelligence
" of Mr. *Hope's* illneſs. Oh! *Cla-*
" *rinda*, how I trembled! Why, ſaid
" ſhe, ma'am, our *Robert* was croſſing
" the *Park*, and met one of Mr.
" *Friendly's* men, who was galloping
" full ſpeed—But pray, ſaid I, inter-
" rupting her, is he, is he ſtill in
" life? Yes, yes, ſaid ſhe, thank God,
" he is in life, and, I hope, out of
" danger. It was but this afternoon
" I ſaw Mrs. *Burk*, Mr. *Friendly's*
" houſekeeper. She told me, the fever
" turned yeſterday, and that he reſted
" very well laſt night. At this inſtant,
" *Clarinda*, what a ſudden change I
" felt from grief to joy! Yet I had
" the preſence of mind to ſeem com-
" poſed, and ſaid, I am very glad to

" hear, Mrs. *Dawſon*, he is out of " danger; that ugly fall has confuſed " my head ſo much, that I forgot, " till now, to enquire for him. Sure, " I ſhould have been very ſorry if he " had died, both on his own account, " and Mr. *Friendly's*, who, I know, " would have felt his loſs very ſe- " verely. I pleaſed myſelf with ſo " artfully concealing my grief and " joy.

" Mrs. *Dawſon* then went on, tell- " ing me what a pretty gentleman he " was, and how much he was liked " by all Mr. *Friendly's* tenants and " ſervants; not a creature about the " houſe, but what were like to break " their hearts. She was going on, " when my mother entered; but that " I might again be left to my own " reflections, I ſaid, if ſhe pleaſed, I " would lie quiet a little. She un-

" derſtood

" derſtood I wanted to ſleep; there-
" fore drew the curtains, and left me
" to my repoſe. My joy ſoon ſub-
" ſided; I dreaded a relapſe. I
" teaſed myſelf with a thouſand
" gloomy thoughts. If he did re-
" cover, I was going to be married
" to Lord *Elmor*, and, of conſequence,
" could expect to have little of his
" company. I naturally began to ex-
" amine myſelf, whether I could pre-
" fer *Tommy* in a chaiſe and pair, to
" my lord with a coach and ſix. I
" thought, and thought again; and
" at laſt concluded, I could prefer
" *Tommy*, though obliged to walk on
" foot, to all the grandeur his lord-
" ſhip could beſtow. But then, Mr.
" *Hope* had never ſaid he loved me;
" my lord had: yet, ſure I could re-
" member many inſtances where *Tom-*
" *my* ſhewed he preferred me to any

" of my ſex; and certainly, thought
" I, it is altogether impoſſible, that
" my lord can love me better in two
" or three hours, than *Tommy*, who
" has known me from my infancy.
" It therefore occurred to me, that his
" lordſhip was as great a ſtranger to
" his own heart, as I had been to
" mine; that he admired me as a fine
" picture, as I had been ſuddenly
" dazzled with a coronet on my coach,
" and all the glittering gewgaws of
" vain grandeur, and empty ſhow. I
" wiſhed, ſincerely, as I had diſcovered
" my miſtake, he might, likewiſe,
" diſcover his; for I now ſhuddered
" at the thought of giving my hand
" to him, when I was convinced an-
" other had my heart.

" Several days paſſed in this man-
" ner; and, in the mean time, I had
" the pleaſure to hear frequently of

" Mr.

" Mr. *Hope's* recovery. My mother " and ſiſters talked of the danger he " had been in before me, and I joined " them ſo unaffectedly, that they never " ſuſpected my concern had any other " ſource than theirs. I kept my " chamber ſeveral weeks, and though " my lord was every day in the houſe, " he was not allowed to come near " me; nor did they mention him in " my hearing, afraid, it ſhould ſeem, " that, in my preſent weak ſtate, the " leaſt emotion might hurt me. One " Day, on learning that Mr. *Hope* " had ſo far recovered, as to be al- " lowed to take a ſhort airing, I found " my ſpirits much revived, and my " mother, obſerving me look better, " ſat down beſide me. I ſhall rejoice " Lord *Elmor*, ſaid ſhe, *Fanny*, by " letting him know how well you are; " I hope, in a day or two, you may

" venture

" venture to receive a viſit from him
" in your dreſſing-room; I aſſure you,
" his lordſhip has been very uneaſy
" on your account, and, now he has
" heard you are ſitting up, is very de-
" ſirous to ſee you. The mention of
" him ſoon damped my ſpirits, and I
" continued ſilent.

" My mother went on: You have
" been extremely lucky, *Fanny*, in
" attracting the notice of his lord-
" ſhip. He is a nobleman, entitled,
" both by quality and fortune, to the
" firſt lady in the kingdom. The
" ſmall fortune you have, which is
" ſcarce worth mentioning, ſhews him
" to be above mercenary views; and
" his preferring you to the fineſt wo-
" men about court, where, doubtleſs,
" except among thoſe who are already
" engaged, he might have his choice,
" diſcovers, at the ſame time, a ſin-
" cere,

" cere, diſintereſted love. Indeed,
" *Fanny*, you have all the reaſon in
" the world to expect happineſs. I
" anſwered, that, were I to accept
" his lordſhip's addreſſes, he could
" not have the ſame aſſurances of my
" being as diſintereſted; for that I
" was afraid it would, on my ſide,
" altogether proceed from views that
" were mercenary. My mother ſeem-
" ed ſurpriſed. Is there any thing,
" ſaid ſhe, *Fanny*, in my lord's beha-
" viour, that you diſlike? I thought,
" ſaid I, your ladyſhip was of opi-
" nion, that there was more required
" than merely not to diſlike. Why,
" that's true, *Fanny*; we have no in-
" tention to hurry you into a mar-
" riage; all in good time. My lord's
" accompliſhments and aſſiduity in
" pleaſing you, I have no doubt, will
" ſoon make an impreſſion on your
" heart.

" heart. But if it ſhould not, my
" deareſt mother, (taking hold of her
" hand, and looking up in her face)
" can you, will you promiſe that nei-
" ther my father nor you will be an-
" gry with me, if I reject him? My
" mother ſeemed a little uneaſy. I
" am amazed, *Fanny*, at your earneſt-
" neſs; I think I can anſwer for Sir
" *William*, as well as for myſelf, that
" we never will force you into a mar-
" riage: but this I am very ſure of,
" that if it does not take place, we
" ſhall be much diſappointed. The
" Doctor entering prevented any fur-
" ther diſcourſe on the ſubject at that
" time. He felt my pulſe, and ſeem-
" ed to think it was not quite ſo re-
" gular as it had been the day before.
" He ordered me to be ſtill kept
" quiet, and deſired me not to talk
" much, till I was a little ſtronger.

" I ſup-

" I ſuppoſe, ſir, ſaid I, it will not be " proper, yet, to ſit in my dreſſing- " room? By no means, ſaid he; you " muſt keep your bed-chamber for " at leaſt theſe eight days. I was " not a little pleaſed at this reprieve.

" My mother went down ſtairs " with the doctor, and came not near " me for upwards of an hour. I un- " derſtood ſhe had been informing " Sir *William* of what had paſſed be- " tween us; and they both conclud- " ed, I had certainly an affection for " another perſon, which gave them " the greateſt uneaſineſs. *Caroline* " was called, and underwent an ex- " amination, whether ſhe knew of " any lover I had, beſides Lord *El-* " *mor?* She declared ſhe did not; " but at the ſame time added, that if " I had one, it was certainly Mr. " *Hope*, as he was the only young

" gentleman

" gentleman that came much about
" the houſe: Yet ſhe had no reaſon,
" ſhe ſaid, to think he was my lover,
" as we never were together, but
" when ſome of the family were with
" us; that it was but a ſhort time
" ſince he came from *London*, and ſhe
" was certain, while he was there, we
" did not keep up a correſpondence.
" My father ſhook his head. My
" mother ſaid, God forbid that any
" of her daughters ſhould be engaged
" to a beggar; but I often thought,
" Sir *William*, that that young man
" met with too great encouragement
" about this houſe; though, God
" knows, I had never any dread of
" this kind, neither: I wonder what
" Mr. *Friendly* means by allowing him
" money to dreſs, as if he had a for-
" tune; I have no notion of people's
" beſtowing their charity in ſuch a
" manner;

" manner; in my opinion he is doing
" him a real injury; and he was
" *Fanny's* Partner, too, at Lady *Pritch-*
" *ard's:* Indeed, indeed, I am afraid
" it is too certain. Well, my dear,
" ſaid Sir *William*, if it is ſo, ſome-
" thing may be thought on to pre-
" vent its going any further: We
" muſt be very cautious; let us watch
" their motions, and be certain of the
" truth, before we proceed. And
" how will you proceed, when you
" are certain? ſaid my mother. That
" muſt be conſidered on, replied my
" father; and do you, my dear, in
" the mean time, avoid giving her
" the leaſt ground to think we enter-
" tain any ſuſpicion. Accordingly I
" knew nothing of all this for ſome
" time.

" After a few days, I was ſo well
" recovered, that I could find no pre-

" tence

" tence for not ſeeing my lord; but
" I begged it of my mother ſo earneſt-
" ly, that ſhe at laſt promiſed not to
" leave us alone together. His lord-
" ſhip was told it would not be pro-
" per for ſome time, ſo was obliged
" to be content with ſeeing me in
" company only. I was extremely
" uneaſy the firſt afternoon he was
" was admitted, and ſcarce ever ven-
" tured (the whole time he ſat) to
" look up; but this his lordſhip im-
" puted to my natural baſhfulneſs,
" and want of a town education; ſo,
" to encourage me, by degrees, he
" avoided being particular, for ſeve-
" ral viſits. This had the deſired ef-
" fect ſo far, that, at the ſecond viſit,
" I ventured to look up a little, and
" the third, I joined in a party at
" quadrille. My thoughts, you may
" believe, during this time, were much

" employed

" employed on Mr. *Hope.* I was con-
" tinually drawing compariſons be-
" twixt him and my lord; you may
" ſuppoſe always to the advantage of
" the former. I lay whole hours
" awake in my bed, thinking if Mr.
" *Hope* ſhould never make his ad-
" dreſſes to me, whether or not I
" would live ſingle for life, and con-
" cluded, I certainly ought; yet I
" was terribly afraid that, by the per-
" ſuaſion of my friends, I ſhould be
" brought to do otherwiſe; but, if
" Mr. *Hope* did love me, and ſhould
" let me know it, before he left the
" Country, not all the powers on earth
" ſhould perſuade me to prefer an-
" other. With ſuch thoughts as theſe
" did I paſs many an anxious hour.

" My lord, after a few viſits, began
" to be a little particular. He would
" ſit down by me, take hold of my hand,

" and

" and ſwear, in a whiſper, that I was
" an angel, a goddeſs, and ſuch ſtuff.
" I generally drew my hand from his,
" ſaid I was unaccuſtomed to ſuch
" compliments, and that I did not
" like them. He at laſt began to
" ſuſpect he was diſagreeable to me,
" and ſignified as much to Sir *Wil-*
" *liam*; but he, though more afraid
" of the truth of this obſervation, I
" believe, than his lordſhip, gave him
" a ſlap on the ſhoulder, and cried,
" *Faint heart never won fair lady*, my
" lord: Girls muſt be allowed a little
" time to play off their airs.—You
" muſt not deſpair. I myſelf danced
" attendance after Lady *Renton* four-
" teen months before ſhe thought
" proper to give her conſent; and yet
" the unconſcionable baggage told me,
" two days after we were married,
" that ſhe intended to have me from

" the

" the firſt time I aſked her the que-
" ſtion, His lordſhip was ſilenced,
" and, indeed, he has taken his ad-
" vice; for I don't think he will ever
" give over teazing me. Some days
" after this I was allowed to walk in
" the garden; but I would not go
" till I had a promiſe that my lord
" ſhould not (if he came) be allowed
" to be with me alone. This I was
" indulged in, a few days; but at laſt
" my mother told me, ſhe was ex-
" tremely ſurpriſed at my behaviour;
" that it was impoſſible I ſhould ever
" come to have any regard for my
" lord, if I was ſo childiſh as not to
" allow him to converſe with me.
" She laid down all the advantages
" that would ariſe to the family from
" my marriage with Lord *Elmor*; that
" it would be an advantage to my
" ſiſters, that *Harry* might, very pro-
" bably,

" bably, get an employment at court,
" and that his lordſhip's intereſt, with-
" out any doubt, would be of great
" benefit to my brother *Frank*. Not
" all the riches and grandeur they
" had in view for myſelf, had the
" power to move me, having already
" given them up, in my own mind,
" without regret; but theſe laſt ad-
" vantages, which never had once oc-
" curred to me, ſtaggered my reſolu-
" tion quite. I was juſt about pro-
" miſing to give my lord all the en-
" couragement he could wiſh, when
" the door opened, and *Robert* ſaid,
" My lady, Mr. *Friendly*, and Mr.
" *Hope*—Good God! what a flutter
" my ſpirits underwent! I felt myſelf
" cold and hot by turns. The good
" Mr. *Friendly* entered, and, taking
" Mr. *Hope* by the hand, ſaid, I have
" brought your ladyſhip here a young
" gentleman

" gentleman raiſed from the dead.
" My lady behaved politely enough,
" though not with that warmth which
" might have been expected on the
" occaſion. She ſaid, ſhe was ex-
" tremely glad to ſee him; for, by
" what accounts ſhe had received
" ſhe never expected to have that
" pleaſure. Mr. *Hope* thanked her
" ladyſhip with his natural politeneſs,
" and, with a look of tenderneſs,
" which, I thought, I perceived, in
" ſpite of my confuſion, ſaid, he was
" extremely ſorry to hear of the acci-
" dent I had met with, but that he
" had ſo far the good fortune as not
" to hear of it till I was out of dan-
" ger. Mr. *Friendly* took me by the
" hand, and ſaid, Indeed, Miſs *Fanny*,
" you two ought to ſalute and con-
" gratulate each other on your nar-
" row eſcape. I'm ſure I coloured

" up to the ears. Mr. *Hope* was mak-
" ing a motion to riſe, when Sir *Wil-*
" *liam* and my ſiſters entered. My
" father took Mr. *Hope* in his arms,
" and, with all the kindneſs imagi-
" nable, expreſſed his happineſs at
" ſeeing him. Mr. *Hope*, on this,
" ſaluted my ſiſters, and, laſt of all,
" me. My mother ſat knotting, and
" never moved. I reflected on this
" ſince, for I took no notice of it at
" the time. Oh! *Clarinda!* it is im-
" poſſible for me to tell you how
" amiable he appeared. His ſickneſs
" had altered him prodigiouſly; and,
" to any eyes but mine, I dare ſay,
" greatly to his diſadvantage: but to
" me it gave a ſoftneſs to his features,
" and, in my imagination, there was
" finely expreſſed, in his once manly
" countenance, tenderneſs and love.
" My mother could not avoid aſking

" them

" them to ſtay dinner. Sir *William*
" was ſurpriſed they ſhould offer to
" go; but Mr. *Friendly* begged to be
" excuſed, ſaying, *Tom* was not al-
" lowed yet to venture to be out in
" the evening; but that he hoped they
" ſhould, very ſoon, give themſelves
" that pleaſure. Sir *William* ſaw them
" to their chaiſe. Mr. *Ho e* endea-
" voured to put on his uſual gaiety,
" ſmiled, and ſhook hands with *Caro-*
" *line* as he went out. My mother,
" I was told, ſaid to Sir *William*, after
" I went out of the dining-room, that
" ſhe was much ſurpriſed at the frank-
" neſs of his behaviour; that, for her
" part, ſhe could not ſo far play the
" hypocrite. My father declared he
" had not done ſo in the leaſt; that
" he always looked on *Tom Hope* as a
" deſerving young fellow; that if he
" had taken a fancy to his daughter,

" it was his misfortune as well as
" hers; and though he would do all
" in his power to prevent a match on
" both our accounts, he ſaw no rea-
" ſon why his regard ſhould be leſs
" for him than before. Beſides, con-
" tinued he, we have no certainty of
" it; and though we ſuſpected him of a
" crime, are we to behave coolly to a
" perſon we value, merely on ſuſpici-
" on? As to the certainty, anſwered my
" lady, I have not the leaſt doubt; I
" only wonder where my eyes were
" before—But I ſhall ſay nothing—
" Sir *William*, take your own way;
" but I muſt think he has got too
" much encouragement about this
" houſe; and to continue it, now we
" know the danger, appears to me
" very abſurd. But you ſeem to
" think it no crime, Sir *William*, in
" a boy, brought up on charity, to
" pretend

" pretend to one of your daughters.
" Indeed, my dear, ſaid Sir *William*,
" I don't like to hear you talk ſo;
" Mr. *Hope* is of as good a family as
" the *Rentons*; and though that were
" not the caſe, his education and mo-
" rals make him a gentleman. The
" firſt noblemen in the country be-
" have to him as ſuch, and even your
" ladyſhip, before this affair, was as
" ready to acknowledge his merit, as
" any one. Don't, therefore, my
" dear, let prejudice blind you, and
" make you behave ſo unlike your-
" ſelf. You ſhall ſee I will take other
" meaſures than thoſe you mention;
" and ſuch as, if their affections are not
" very ſtrongly fixed, will, on gene-
" rous natures, have a better chance
" to prove effectual. I have done, Sir
" *William*, ſaid my mother; but I wiſh
" you don't repent this method when

" it is too late. My father ſeemed
" vexed, and went out of the room.

" This viſit fixed me in the reſo-
" lution not to ſacrifice my lord, and
" myſelf, to the intereſt of my
" friends; for I was convinced it
" would be doing my lord the greateſt
" injury, to give him my hand, when
" my heart was ſo fully in the poſ-
" ſeſſion of another. And this
" thought, I ſay, entirely reconciled
" me to myſelf, in perſiſting in my
" reſolution againſt all their argu-
" ments. In the mean time, my lord
" continued his daily viſits, and omit-
" ted nothing in his power to engage
" my affections.

" One day his lordſhip had aſked
" Sir *William* and my lady to dine at
" his ſeat, and ſee the improvements
" he had made ſince the old earl's
" death. It was not thought proper

" that

" that I ſhould make one of the
" party; ſo, on that account, the com-
" pany of my ſiſters was not deſired.

" They were gone about an hour,
" when who ſhould come in, but Mr.
" *Hope!* I, at that time, was in the
" garden alone, muſing on the ſitua-
" tion I was in, and wondering what
" could be the cauſe of his abſenting
" himſelf from us ſo long, when, as I
" had underſtood from Mrs. *Dawſon*,
" he went out every day an airing.

" *Caroline* was at her harpſichord,
" and *Nell* had gone to call on Miſs
" *Wilks*, our clergyman's daughter,
" who is about her own age. When
" Mr. *Hope* called, he was told by
" *Helen*, the chambermaid, that Sir
" *William* and my lady were on a viſit,
" but that the young ladies were at
" home, and, ſhe believed, in the gar-
" den. *Helen* had ſeen me go there,

" and, it ſeems, it was whiſpered
" amongſt the ſervants, that Miſs
" *Fanny* was quite another creature,
" ſince Lord *Elmor* was come about
" the houſe, which they imputed to
" my having certainly vowed to be
" true to Mr. *Hope*, and which the
" cruelty and ambition of my parents
" wanted me to break. This, it
" ſeems, was firmly believed amongſt
" the lower ſervants, and many won-
" derful ſtories of the conſequence of
" broken vows were, every night,
" talked over the kitchen fire. *He-*
" *len*, who had a great regard for me,
" and always ſaid I was the ſweeteſt
" young lady in the houſe, trembled
" for the danger ſhe thought me in;
" and out of zeal for my welfare, and
" to frighten me from the fatal pur-
" poſe, uſed, as often as ſhe thought
" me within hearing, to chant out the

" melancholy

" melancholy ditty of *Margaret's grimly*
" *Ghoſt.* Prepoſſeſſed with theſe
" thoughts, the good-natured *Helen*
" was quite happy at the opportunity
" of ſending Mr. *Hope* to me in the
" garden alone. I had got to the
" ſhady walk at the bottom of the ter-
" race, and had ſat down on the little
" green ſeat, which you are ſo fond
" of, and which, you know, is ſur-
" rounded with jeſſamine and wood-
" bine. I had taken a volume of the
" Spectator with me; but the beau-
" ties of that admired work were un-
" able, at that time, to command my
" attention.

" I was ſitting with my head lean-
" ing on one hand, the other hanging
" careleſsly at my ſide, with the book
" in it, when Mr. *Hope* entered the
" walk. I was ſo deep in contem-
" plation, that I never moved, till he

" was got ſo cloſe, as to kneel down
" and look up in my face, my eyes
" being fixed on the ground. Had
" *Margaret's* grimly ghoſt appeared, I
" could not have been more alarmed.
" I gave a great ſhriek, and the book
" dropped from my hand. Mr. *Hope*,
" in the greateſt confuſion, blamed
" his raſhneſs, and proteſted he would
" rather die, than give me a moment's
" pain. I recovered ſo far as to beg
" he would not make himſelf uneaſy,
" for that the effects of my fright
" would ſoon wear off. Would to
" God! ſaid he, taking my hand,
" which he preſſed to his lips, that
" the effect of your goodneſs and
" charms——Here he ſtopped, and,
" throwing himſelf at my feet, ſaid,
" Oh, madam! forgive, forgive a
" creature deſtined to miſery. Be-
" lieve me, I had no intention—I wiſh

" my

" my Lord *Elmor* and you all the
" happineſs it is poſſible to enjoy—
" Think me not ſo mean as to have
" one ſelfiſh wiſh. Pardon me, dear-
" eſt creature, pardon this unguarded
" moment. Oh, *Fanny!* can you,
" will you forgive me?

" Imagine to yourſelf, my dear *Cla-*
" *rinda*, the condition I was in. The
" agitation of my ſpirits had very near
" overcome my ſenſes.

" Oh! Mr. *Hope*, leave me, ſaid I.
" Yes, madam, he replied, I will leave
" you, never——I took hold of his
" hand. Don't go—Believe me—I
" never, never will marry Lord *Elmor*.
" Gracious heaven! exclaimed he, is
" it poſſible? Can my *Fanny*—But
" my ſenſes deceive me—What am I?
" I can have no hopes—Such beauty,
" ſuch merit, can never condeſcend
" to look ſo low. I begged him to

" riſe, and deſired him not to give " way to his fears, for that my parents " had promiſed never to force me into " a marriage, but, at the ſame time I " was determined never to marry " without their conſent. It is needleſs " for me to deſcribe the extacy he " was in, or the pleaſure I felt.

" How long we ſhould have contin- " nued in this ſoft intercourſe, he tell- " ing the ſtrength, and vowing a con- " tinuance, of his paſſion, and I frankly " owning mine to be little inferior, I " cannot ſay; but the ſight of *Caroline*, " at a diſtance, put a ſtop to it, and " made us endeavour to recollect our- " ſelves. On her approach, we found " it impoſſible to hide our confuſion. " We behaved very aukwardly. And " ſhe is too diſcerning (though ſhe " had wanted the reaſon ſhe had for " ſuſpicion) not to have obſerved it.

" We

" We walked into the houſe—ſpoke
" little in our way thither. I ſaid, it
" is a charming day, though it was
" quite thick and foggy; enquired
" the hour, though my watch was by
" my ſide; and Mr. *Hope*, as *Caroline*
" told me, aſked her one queſtion
" ſeveral times over. In ſhort, we
" both diſcovered the flutter we were
" in, every time we opened our lips.
" When we got into the houſe, Mr.
" *Hope* offered to go, and *Caroline* be-
" ing impatient to hear what I would
" ſay, did not offer to detain him.
" And, to ſay the truth, I was as im-
" patient to unburthen the deſires of
" my heart, as ſhe was to hear them;
" determining to truſt to her good-
" nature and diſcretion for the reſt.
" Mr. *Hope* went away, it ſeems, with-
" out venturing to look me in the face,
" while I ſat twiſting my handkerchief,
" unable to move. When

" When *Caroline* returned, (for ſhe
" went down ſtairs with him) I ran
" to her, and taking her in my arms,
" Oh, *Caroline! Caroline!* ſaid I, what
" will become of your poor *Fanny?*
" The dear girl melted into tears, and
" we continued ſome moments ſob-
" bing in each other's arms. After
" this affectionate embrace, I begged
" her to ſlip up ſtairs with me to my
" dreſſing-room, and I would tell her
" all. We accordingly did ſo, and I
" there opened to her every ſecret of
" my heart. She, in return, told me
" of Sir *William* and my lady's ſuſpi-
" cion, and aſked me how I intended
" to behave. It was impoſſible, I
" ſaid, to form any reſolution; that
" I was certain I could not play the
" hypocrite, and that the thoughts of
" my lord's addreſſes were now worſe
" than death. She declared ſhe did

" not

" not know how to adviſe me, but that
" I might aſſuredly depend on her
" good wiſhes and ſecreſy. Generous
" creature, ſaid I, again taking her in
" my arms; is it poſſible you can ſo
" eaſily give up the thoughts of ſuch
" great advantages, which would ariſe
" from my marriage with Lord *Elmor?*
" Yes, my dear *Fanny*, ſaid ſhe, God
" forbid that grandeur ſhould affect
" me ſo, as to put it in competition
" with the happineſs of my ſiſter.
" But, my dear creature, added ſhe, I
" rely on your prudence, as well as
" promiſe, that you will not marry
" Mr. *Hope*, till he ſhall be in ſuch
" circumſtances as may afford a poſſi-
" bility that Sir *William* will give his
" conſent. I again aſſured her I would
" not. We then compoſed ourſelves,
" as well as we could, and went down
" to dinner. *Nell* ſaid, ſhe was very

" ſure

" ſure we had been crying, for that
" our eyes were as red as fire. Are
" they? ſaid *Caroline*; but, it is no
" wonder, for there is no reading that
" *Clariſſa* without tears. This paſſed
" well enough; but I was quite un-
" eaſy at the thoughts of appearing
" before Sir *William*, and my lady;
" and the more ſo, as I was afraid
" Lord *Elmor* would come with them.
" I therefore propoſed to *Caroline*, that
" I ſhould go to bed, and that ſhe
" ſhould tell them I was a little in-
" diſpoſed, which would prevent them
" from teazing me, till I could reco-
" ver my ſpirits by a night's reſt:
" and, to ſay the truth, it was no
" feigned ſickneſs, neither; for the
" agitation of the mind (at leaſt I find
" it ſo) ever affects the health. I ac-
" cordingly went to bed, and the
" good *Caroline* ſat by me, made tea,

" and

" and gave me all the encouragement
" ſhe could.

" I was now both happy and un-
" eaſy: I was fully aſſured of the love
" and eſteem of the man I preferred
" to all the world; and I had my
" ſiſter, who, inſtead of being againſt
" me, as I had dreaded, joined me, in
" thinking, it would be very ungene-
" rous in me to marry my lord, pre-
" poſſeſſed as I was ſo much in favour
" of another.

" About ſeven o'clock Sir *William*
" and my lady returned without my
" lord. The firſt queſtion my mother
" aſked *Caroline* was, if any company
" had been with us ſince ſhe went
" out? Not any, madam, returned
" ſhe, except Mr. *Hope*, who called in
" the forenoon, but would not ſtay
" dinner. Mr. *Hope!* exclaimed my
" mother. Where's *Fanny?* Shut the
" door,

" door, *Caroline.* She complained,
" madam, of a pain in her head, ſo I
" adviſed her to go to bed. Very
" well: Now tell me, *Caroline*, did
" Mr. *Hope* ſee your ſiſter alone? Yes,
" madam; *Helen* thought that *Fanny*
" and I were in the garden together,
" ſo ſent him there. I was at my
" harpſichord; but the moment I was
" told of Mr. *Hope's* being gone to
" my ſiſter, which, I believe, was in
" a few minutes, I went out to them.
" Soon after, perceiving a ſhower of
" rain coming on, we made what
" haſte we could into the houſe, and,
" in about five minutes after, Mr.
" *Hope* took his leave. And ſhe is
" gone to bed, you ſay? Yes, ma-
" dam. I muſt go up ſtairs, and ſee
" her. That girl gives me the great-
" eſt vexation. Sir *William*, I wiſh
" you would ſpeak to her. You

" would

" would not have me, my dear, ſaid
" he, go and teaze the poor girl now
" ſhe is gone to bed ſick? I know not
" what to do, replied my mother,
" though I think I muſt go up and
" ſee her. Accordingly ſhe came up
" to my room directly; and, although
" her coming was no more than I
" expected, yet my heart beat as if it
" would have forced its way, when I
" heard her on the ſtairs.

" When ſhe came in, ſhe ſat
" down by the ſide of the bed,
" and very kindly aſked me how
" I did. I ſaid I had a pain at my
" heart, which made me a little un-
" eaſy, but I hoped it would ſoon
" wear off. Your heart! child, why
" *Caroline* ſaid it was your head. Yes,
" madam, my head was a little
" affected, but I think it is better.
" Indeed, *Fanny*, it is no wonder that

" both

" both head and heart pain you.
" Children, who are undutiful, can't
" expect to be happy. If you live to
" be a parent, you will know, per-
" haps, what it is to have your rea-
" ſonable deſires diſobeyed. God
" knows, it is your intereſt we have
" at heart. What is grandeur to Sir
" *William* and me? Our ſole ambi-
" tion is, to ſee our children ſettled
" genteely in the world; and where
" could we poſſibly expect to have
" that ambition gratified ſo well, as
" in your marriage with Lord *Elmor*?
" She then gave me an account of his
" fine houſe, rich furniture, numerous
" ſervants, and grand equipage; all
" which I ſaw her ladyſhip had been
" very much delighted with. I con-
" tinued ſilent the whole time. She
" then took me by the hand, and
" ſaid, now, my dear *Fanny*, ſhall I

" tell

" tell your father that you intend to
" receive my lord in the manner we
" wiſh you? Oh, my dear mother,
" (ſaid I, riſing up in the bed, my
" tears almoſt choaking me) I had ra-
" ther die, than be thought diſobedi-
" ent — But—indeed—indeed—I can
" keep the ſecret no longer—I never,
" never can marry Lord *Elmor*. My
" God! exclaimed my mother, are
" you married? No, indeed— (and I
" ſobbed as if my heart would burſt)
" I will never marry without your con-
" ſent, and that of my dear father;
" but the whole world can never make
" me conſent to marry my lord. And
" this, ſaid ſhe, is the mighty ſecret
" you have the aſſurance to tell me?
" That beggarly ſtripling that was
" here to-day has inſpired you with
" this courage, I ſuppoſe. Sure, ne-
" ver was ſuch an unhappy woman

" as

" as I am. (Here ſhe walked up and " down the room in ſuch a paſſion as I " had never ſeen her in before.) See " what method Sir *William* will try " now. If he ever gets leave to en- " ter this door again—But I can ſtay " no longer——I have not patience. " So ſaying, ſhe hurried out of the " room, leaving me almoſt dead with " fear.

" *Caroline* came running up to me. " She gave me ſome lavender drops, " which recovered me a little; but I " was unable to ſpeak. I leaned my " head on her boſom, and we both " continued ſilent for a conſiderable " time. At laſt, we endeavoured to " comfort one another; for, in truth, " ſhe ſeemed to ſtand as much in need " of it as myſelf.

" Sir *William* and my lady were " cloſetted, at this time; but, in

" about

" about an hour, Mrs. *Dawſon* knock-
" ed at our door, and deſired Miſs
" *Renton* to come down to my lady:
" *Caroline* was afraid to go; but ſhe
" dared not to diſobey. Before ſhe
" went, ſhe aſked me what ſhe ſhould
" ſay concerning Mr. *Hope*, if they
" ſhould examine her, which ſhe was
" afraid they would? I deſired her to
" conceal nothing, but relate the
" whole juſt as it had happened.
" That I was upon the point of giving
" my conſent to marry Lord *Elmor*,
" when the report of the danger Mr.
" *Hope* was in, firſt made me acquaint-
" ed with my heart; that I was now
" thankful I had never given my lord
" any encouragement, but what my
" fears for their diſpleaſure forced me
" to, and that I never went farther
" than in not abſolutely giving him a
" refuſal. *Caroline* agreed with me,

" that

" that this was right. So down ſtairs
" ſhe went, and I did not ſee her again
" till above an hour and half. You
" may eaſily imagine how impatient
" I was for her return. At length
" ſhe came. She begged I would
" make myſelf eaſy; that ſhe plainly
" ſaw Sir *William* was not ſo angry
" with me, as ſhe had feared he would
" be; that he ſat quite calm while her
" ladyſhip related to him the particu-
" lars, and then ſaid, there is no help
" for it, Lord *Elmor* muſt be told di-
" rectly; and added, that it would be
" very ungenerous to ſuffer his lord-
" ſhip to be dangling after you, when
" they knew you had given your
" heart to another. So you will con-
" ſent, Sir *William*, ſaid my mother,
" to her marrying that boy? No, my
" dear, returned he, that, I dare ſay,
" they do not expect at preſent. There-
" fore,

" fore, compoſe yourſelf—I will ſpeak
" to *Fanny* to-morrow.

" Oh! *Clarinda*, you cannot con-
" ceive what pleaſure it gave me to
" hear my dear father had ſpoken ſo
" kindly! I wiſhed, yet was aſhamed,
" to ſee him. You may imagine I
" ſlept but little all night. I got up
" pretty early, and was ready in my
" dreſſing-room to receive him. He
" no ſooner opened the door, than I
" ran to him, kneeled down, and beg-
" ged his forgiveneſs. He raiſed me,
" led me to a chair, and ſat down by
" me. Don't be afraid, ſaid he, my dear
" *Fanny*; (for I trembled as if in an
" ague fit) I come not to force
" you into a marriage againſt your
" inclination, nor even to perſuade
" you to it. I am only ſorry that
" your fears for our diſpleaſure have
" kept you ſo long from opening your

" mind to us. Our expectations are,
" indeed, much disappointed; and, I
" am afraid, my lord may take it much
" amiss, he having met with such en-
" couragement, when, perhaps, he
" thinks we knew of your attachment
" to another; but we must endeavour
" to undeceive him. And now, my dear
" *Fanny*, assume your wonted chear-
" fulness; be as easy as you can:
" Your mother, I must own, is a little
" unreasonable; however, she is a
" good woman, and loves you, as she
" does all her children, with a real
" affection. She has ever been a good
" wife and a tender mother; but,
" being altogether unaccustomed to
" disappointment, she cannot easily
" brook it. Her heart was much set
" on this marriage, as she thought it
" would have been such an advantage
" to the whole family. She seems, at
" present,

" preſent, quite poſitive never to allow
" Mr. *Hope* to come here. But I
" would adviſe you to make yourſelf
" eaſy. I will go this day to Mr.
" *Friendly*, and talk to him. I hope
" both *Tom* and you have more diſ-
" cretion than to think of marrying,
" till he ſhall be in a ſituation to main-
" tain you. And, you may depend
" on it, I ſhall do all in my power
" to promote his intereſt, on his own
" account as well as yours. I am of
" opinion he ſhould go abroad for
" ſome little time, as a phyſician is
" ſeldom much thought of without
" doing ſo. But you are both
" young enough, ſo may wait
" with patience; and I hope Provi-
" dence will crown you with happi-
" neſs.

" Do you think, *Clarinda*, I was
" able to thank ſuch a father as I

" ought? No, it was impoſſible. I " endeavoured to throw myſelf at his " feet; but he prevented me, and " ſaid, we muſt play the hypocrite a " little with your mother; I will go " down, and let her know, that it is " impoſſible to prevail on you to ac- " cept of Lord *Elmor*; but that you " have promiſed not to ſee Mr. *Hope* " without her approbation. Nor will " I, ſir, ſaid I, unleſs I have your al- " lowance as well as my mother's; I " give you my word of honour. My " father ſmiled, and told me, I would " not have been ſo ready with my " promiſe, if I had not known that " he would do all in his power to " promote my happineſs: and, " taking my hand, well, continued " he, remember, *Fanny*, I depend " on your honour.——No priſoner, " releaſed from a long confine- " ment,

" ment, no poor creature, that had " been ſentenced to die, and had got " a remiſſion of his doom; nor no " girl, arrived to the height of her " wiſhes, after the deepeſt deſpair, " could poſſibly be more happy than " I was at that inſtant.

" *Caroline* came to me as ſoon as Sir " *William* had left me, and we both " wept for joy, as we had before done " with grief. The thoughts of part- " ing with Mr. *Hope* had not power, " at this time, to give me the leaſt " uneaſineſs. I was much happier " than I could expect.

" I kept my chamber all day, as " I was reſolved (except my mother " inſiſted on the contrary) not to ſee " my lord, until Sir *William* had " acquainted him with my reſolu- " tion. He was as good as his word. " He went directly to Mr. *Friendly*,

" and found that gentleman juſt
" ſtepping into his chaiſe, with *Tom*,
" to take an airing. They immedi-
" ately returned to the houſe, Mr.
" *Friendly* deſiring his ſervant to take
" the horſes out of the chaiſe; my
" father begged he would not, as he
" told him he could not poſſibly ſtay,
" but would be glad to talk to him
" a little in private. On this Mr.
" *Friendly* deſired Mr. *Hope* to go by
" himſelf. Do ſo, *Tom*, ſaid Sir *William*,
" but don't let your ride be far,
" as I want to have a little conver-
" ſation with you before I go away.
" *Tom's* heart foreboded ſomething,
" he did not know what. He ſaw
" nothing in my father's countenance
" to alarm him; yet, what could
" he want to ſay to him? He
" was ſenſible that *Caroline* had ob-
" ſerved our confuſion; ſo, naturally

" concluded

" concluded ſhe had raiſed ſuſpi-
" cion, by acquainting Sir *William*
" and my lady. This put him in
" the utmoſt perplexity, as he ſup-
" poſed he ſhould undergo an exami-
" nation, when he returned. *Tom*,
" of all things in the world, ab-
" horred to tell an untruth. He
" looked on a man that could be
" mean enough to tell a lye, to be
" unworthy the name of gentleman;
" and to confeſs that he had hopes
" of me, and that I had given him
" encouragement, would not only be
" baſe, he thought, but have the
" appearance of arrogance and pre-
" ſumption.

" Mr. *Hope* drove up and down
" without knowing where, and with-
" out being able to reſolve on any
" ſettled plan of behaviour on his re-
" turn. Sir *William*, in the mean time, ac-

" quainted Mr. *Friendly* with all that " had paſſed, and concluded with " ſaying, that he might *adviſe*, but " never would pretend to *force* his " daughter's inclinations in a matter, " on which the happineſs of her whole " life depended. That if *Tom* had " been a looſe, rakiſh, young fellow, " he certainly would have done all in " his power to prevent my ruin; and, " at the ſame time, he would never " have been acceſſary in deceiving " any gentleman, by allowing me to " give my hand to him, before that " time and good advice had weaned " my affection from the other. But my " good opinion of *Tom*, continued " Sir *William*, makes me think I " ſhould be doing my girl an injury " to prevent her marriage with a " worthy young man, any farther, " Mr. *Friendly*, than to give her my

" advice

" advice (which my good opinion of
" them both makes me think they
" will follow) not to marry till *Tom*
" can be put in ſuch a ſituation as
" to enable him to keep a family
" tolerably genteel.

" Mr. *Friendly* ſhook my father
" by the hand; ſaid, he ſpoke his very
" ſentiments, commended *Tom* in the
" warmeſt terms, and wiſhed it was
" in his power to do for him as he
" deſerved; but as it was not, he
" hoped his own merit, joined to the
" little intereſt which he would do
" all in his power to procure for
" him, might, in time, render him
" worthy of Sir *William Renton's*
" daughter. He added, that, ſince
" his illneſs, he had ſuſpected his
" affection for me; for that he had
" mentioned my name ſeveral times
" in the height of his fever.

"This, it ſeems, was partly the "reaſon that the ſervants thought I "was going to be prevailed on to "break my vow: for as Mr. *Friendly's* "ſeat is but a little way from *Renton* "*Park*, they ſoon communicated "this from one to another, with, no "doubt, many additions.

"Mr. *Friendly* agreed with Sir "*William*, that it was neceſſary Mr. "*Hope* ſhould go abroad; and while "they were conſulting in what man-"ner he ſhould be ſent, *Tom* drove into "the court yard. He had ſchemed, "by this time, an evaſive kind of "anſwer to the queſtions he thought "would be put to him, and was "coming in with a tolerable degree "of ſpirits; but no ſooner had he "ſet his foot on the ſtair, than they "forſook him, and he entered the "dining-room in the greateſt con-

"fuſion.

" fuſion. Come, *Tom*, ſaid my fa-
" ther, taking him by the hand, Mr.
" *Friendly* and I have been planning
" out for you ſchemes of future
" happineſs. *Tom* bowed and thanked
" him; ſaid, as to Mr. *Friendly*, he
" was daily loading him with obliga-
" tions which it would never be in
" his power to repay. Mr. *Friendly*
" replied, *Tom*, you owe me nothing:
" I have done no more than my duty,
" and leſs, far leſs than my wiſhes ex-
" tended, or than I think your merits
" deſerve. But my friend, Sir *William*
" here, has been telling me, that
" Miſs *Fanny Renton* and you have
" exchanged hearts. *Tom's* coun-
" tenance, from a ſickly pale, was in
" a moment ſcarlet. He attempted
" to ſpeak, but his confuſion was ſo
" great, that all power of utterance
" was ſtopped. Sir *William*, per-

" ceiving his embarraſſment, ſoon
" relieved him from it, by ſaying, I
" aſſure you *Tom*, my girl has given
" ſufficient proofs that you have her
" heart in poſſeſſion; and though, I
" muſt own to you, I am a little diſ-
" appointed in my views, I ſhall be
" no bar to your happineſs, whenever
" you have it in your power to pro-
" vide for her. *Tom* flung himſelf
" at his feet. Oh! ſir, ſaid he, it is
" impoſſible I can ever deſerve ſuch
" goodneſs—My joy is too great for
" utterance—Sir *William* raiſed him.
" Don't be too happy, *Tom*, ſaid he,
" you will have enough yet to exer-
" ciſe your patience—you muſt put
" yourſelf in the way of fortune.
" That was a good toaſt, *Tom*, you
" once gave at my houſe. *Let reaſon*
" *be the pilot when paſſion blows the*
" *gale*. He then gave him ſome ad-

" vice

" vice with regard to his conduct,
" and concluded with telling him of
" my mother's continuing to be bent
" on my marriage with Lord *Elmor*.
" Mr. *Hope* aſſured him he would be
" adviſed in every part of his con-
" duct by him, and Mr. *Friendly*, and
" ſince he was now made to flatter
" himſelf that I ſhould be one day
" his, there was no difficulty but
" he would, with ſpirit, endeavour
" to ſurmount. In ſhort, my dear
" *Clarinda*, we were both, at this
" time, perfectly happy.

" It is needleſs to tell you the
" particulars of my lord's behaviour,
" when Sir *William* told him he was
" ſorry to inform him that his daugh-
" ter *Fanny* had, unknown to any of
" the family, beſtowed her affections
" on another: he ſeemed, and cer-
" tainly was, very uneaſy. He left

" the

" the houſe, without being able to
" ſee any one, and came not back to
" *Renton Park* for ſeveral months af-
" terwards. My mother, though ſhe
" knows none of the particulars of
" my engagement with Mr. *Hope*,
" behaves to me very coolly.

" His lordſhip, within theſe few
" weeks, has again paid us ſeveral
" viſits. He does not directly make
" his addreſſes to me as before, yet
" he teazes me ſo as to give me the
" greateſt uneaſineſs. He has heard,
" it ſeems, that Mr. *Hope* is going
" abroad, and whether he builds his
" expectations on either of us proving
" inconſtant to the other I know not,
" but ſtill he has hopes. Oh! *Clarinda*,
" we have indeed, as Sir *William* ſaid,
" enough yet to exerciſe our patience.
" The danger of the ſeas, which have
" been ſo fatal to his parents, the

" uncertainty

" uncertainty of his ſucceeding in his
" profeſſion, and the great diſtance
" of time it muſt be before we can
" be ſettled for life, though provi-
" dence ſhould favour us even to
" our wiſhes, are they not ſufficient
" to damp my ſpirits in the midſt of
" my higheſt hopes? There is another
" circumſtance gives me great un-
" eaſineſs. My mother ſuſpects *Caro-*
" *line* of encouraging me in my diſ-
" obedience. The dear girl had
" ventured to ſay, one day, too much
" in my favour, when my mother was
" hinting at her having new hopes
" on my lord's coming to the houſe
" again. I ſuppoſe, ſaid her lady-
" ſhip to her, ſome ſuch pretty fellow,
" with not a farthing in his pocket,
" you have in view for yourſelf. And,
" indeed, no wonder if it ſhould be
" ſo, as Sir *William* ſeems to encou-

" rage

" rage you in it. This her ladyſhip
" ſaid from my father's ſo eaſily ac-
" quainting *Lord Elmor* of my diſlike;
" for though ſhe had not argument
" ſufficient to alter his purpoſe, yet
" ſhe could not help letting fall, now
" and then, hints that ſhe was far
" from approving what he had done.

" *Caroline* is in the utmoſt dread
" every time her ladyſhip talks on
" this ſubject, leſt ſhe ſhould inſiſt on
" her telling her whether ſhe knows
" if Mr. *Hope* and I carry on a cor-
" reſpondence by letter. This, in-
" deed, we have done ever ſince Sir
" *William* gave us permiſſion, which
" was that day he made the before-
" mentioned viſit at Mr. *Friendly's*.
" At the ſame time, he adviſed Mr.
" *Hope* againſt private meetings, as,
" he ſaid, they would certainly be
" found out, and incenſe Lady *Ren-*

" *ton.*

" *ton.* This advice, though hard, he " promiſed to follow; and, except " at the diſtance of our pews " at church, I have never ſeen " him ſince the day on which Sir " *William* went to Mr. *Friendly's*, with " a deſign to tell him of my mother's " uneaſineſs, on his account, and " to let him know, that his viſits " would not be any longer agreeable. " So this, you know, accounts " for his not coming as uſual. In " caſe *Caroline* ſhould be examined, " as I am afraid her friendſhip for me " would lead her to equivocate, I " propoſed to her (though it has been " a ſevere puniſhment to me) never " to talk about Mr. *Hope*; that ſhe " may declare with truth, that, ſince " her ladyſhip had appeared ſo angry, " ſhe has avoided ever mentioning " his name to me; and this reſolution " we have kept. " The

" The firſt letter I received from " Mr. *Hope* was delivered me by an " old woman at church. She had " been his nurſe, and has a ſmall " cottage, rent free, belonging to Mr. " *Friendly*. The method ſhe took " was this. I was coming through " the crowd at the church door, be- " twixt *Caroline* and *Nelly*. Sir *Wil-* " *liam*, and my lady, were a little be- " fore us, when the old woman gave " my ſack a gentle pull behind. I " turned about. Madam, ſaid ſhe, " you have dropped your handker- " chief; and, giving me a ſignificant " wink, ſhewed me a glimpſe of the " letter; the ſight of which was ſuffi- " cient to induce me to be ſilent, " with reſpect to my having no pre- " tenſions to the former; and there- " fore I ſaid no more than, Thank you, " good woman; and haſtily put them

" into

" into my pocket. The purport of
" Mr. *Hope's* epiſtle being in the
" uſual ſtrain of all lovers, I ſhall ſay
" nothing of it, farther, than that he
" informed me his letters, for the fu-
" ture, ſhould be put in a hole at the
" root of a great tree, which ſtands
" betwixt this, and Sir *Robert*
" *Forreſt's.* I put mine in the ſame
" place; for though Sir *William*
" allowed of our correſponding,
" we think this a much ſafer way
" than truſting any one to deliver
" them, as my mother might ſuſpect
" any ſtranger coming about the
" houſe; and, moreover, the bribing
" of ſervants to do things in ſecret
" from the people they ſerve, is, cer-
" tainly, wrong, and ought never to
" be done. In the laſt letter I had
" from Mr. *Hope*, he informs me, that
" Mr. *Friendly* has got Sir *Robert Forreſt*

" to

" to write in his favour to Sir *George*
" *Evergreen*, who goes governor
" to ——, next *Auguſt*.

" Thus, my dear *Clarinda*, have I
" given you all the particulars of my
" ſituation. It was Lord *Elmor* you
" ſaw with me this evening. I met
" him at the foot of the avenue, as I
" came out. I ſuppoſe, on ſeeing
" me, he had alighted from his cha-
" riot. He aſked the honour to at-
" tend me in my walk. I told his
" lordſhip, that Lady *Cheſter* and *Ca-*
" *roline* were juſt going to walk, and
" would be glad of his company, as
" I ſhould, if I had not promiſed to
" meet Miſs *Cathcart* in the evening
" for the ſame purpoſe. Will you
" allow me, madam, ſaid he, to at-
" tend you, till you meet Miſs *Cath-*
" *cart?* Being afraid he ſhould think
" I had ſome one elſe to meet, I

" told

" told him I had no objection, if his
" lordſhip would take that trouble.
" I endeavoured to draw him into a
" general ſubject, as we walked; but
" to no purpoſe. He complained of
" being very unfortunate, in having
" nothing to divide his wiſhes; that
" he had every thing in the world to
" make him happy, but that my
" cruelty had made all other enjoy-
" ments taſteleſs and inſipid. I was
" extremely ſorry, I ſaid, that I ſhould
" be the occaſion of his unhappineſs;
" but, I hoped that what he at preſent
" looked on as a misfortune, he would
" ſoon find to be otherwiſe. We
" ought, my lord, to think every
" thing is ordered for the beſt; and
" ſure, it is very ungrateful in us,
" when we are bleſſed with all the
" *real* good things of this life, that
" we ſhould fret and repine for the

" want

" want of one *imaginary* good, that " is out of our power. How eaſy, " *Clarinda*, is it to give advice? I am " ſure his lordſhip might have deſired " me to take it home with me; for, " I confeſs, I ſtand as much in need " of it as he can do. When we came " within view of you, I ſtopped, and " thanked him for his company, and " wiſhed him a good evening. He " only ſaid, with a ſigh, Madam, I " obey; and left me. You have " now, *Clarinda*, heard what occaſion " I have to be thoughtful, and ſure " you will think I have ſufficient rea- " ſon."

Here the dear girl concluded; and, you may believe, *Nancy*, I encouraged her as much as lay in my power. I told her how intimate my father is with Sir *George Evergreen*, and that I made no doubt but I ſhould get him

to

to ſpeak to Sir *George*, in favour of Mr. *Hope*. I praiſed her much for her diſintereſted love. At the ſame time, *Nancy*, it ſeems to me the moſt extraordinary thing in the world, in a girl to prefer a young man without a fortune, (who is obliged to go where it is a thouſand chances if he ever returns) to a coronet, and a fine young nobleman, who would make her outſhine the moſt of her ſex as much in rank, as ſhe now does in beauty. But I don't know how it is; there is ſomething in diſintereſtedneſs, conſtancy, and, indeed, in every virtue, that though we cannot practice it ourſelves, we muſt certainly have a very bad heart if we do not admire it in others; and ſtill worſe if we would endeavour to leſſen the merit of it, by endeavouring to ſhew it in a bad light. Yet I can't help having ſome excuſe,

excuſe, too, for Lady *Renton:* She thinks the intereſt of her family is concerned in this marriage; and ſure it muſt be very laudable in her to promote it as much as lies in her power. I am afraid, *Nancy*, if her ladyſhip had told me the ſtory, I ſhould not have perceived the beauty of the above-mentioned virtues; and, conſequently, I ſhould have been as much a friend to Lord *Elmor*, as I now am to Mr. *Hope*. And could I have been to blame, if the matter then had appeared to me in a different light? And yet, how ill-natured are we, in condemning people who differ from us in opinion, without ever conſidering, that, perhaps, their view in acting, is as praiſe-worthy as ours, tho' the end be oppoſite? Ought we not, always, *Nancy*, to judge favourably of the conduct of others, where there

is the leaſt poſſibility. Am not I very ſerious? I know you will tell me I am ſo by ſtarts; but, my dear *Nancy*, judge favourably of theſe ſtarts. Thank me for the *Story of Miſs* Fanny Renton, and do not criticiſe on my manner of telling it. Remember, though I have not done it all the juſtice an able pen might, I have done the beſt I could. I know you will admire Sir *William*, as alſo the good-natured *Caroline*. Is not Mr. *Friendly* a real good man? And pray don't overlook the merit of honeſt *Helen*, the chambermaid. Believe me, I was ſo taken with the part ſhe has in the ſtory, that I made her ſing *Margaret's grimly Ghoſt*, and gave her a crown to drink the health of all true lovers. You will now ſee the reaſon of your not having heard from me before. I could not think of ſend-

ing away my letter, till I had given you the hiſtory as far as it went. That heaven may grant a happy concluſion to it, is the ſincere wiſh of

Your affectionate friend,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

June 8.

THANKS to my deareſt *Nancy*, for her complimentary epiſtle. So, you expect to ſee it advertiſed, *The Hiſtory of Miſs* Clarinda Cathcart, *and Miſs* Fanny Renton? I am afraid, my dear, you muſt be content with the latter; for the part I am to bear in the hiſtory, is like to be very inſignificant, ſince I am already arrived at

at the age of eighteen, and have never had one ſerious lover, nor ever been once ſeriouſly in love. I ſay ſeriouſly, *Nancy*, though you know, I have had my admirers too. And you know, likewiſe, how much I was charmed with Lord *C*— for ſending a challenge to Sir *Peter Whiffle*. How, alſo, I forgot his valour, and fell in love with Mr. *Fairweather*, in dancing a minuet; after that, with *Captain Careleſs*, for handing me, with ſo genteel an air, from Lady *Evergreen's* routs; and laſt of all, with *Bob Frolic*, for whiſpering in my ear, that I was handſomer than Miſs *Sprightley*; for which I rewarded him with a whole week's conſtancy.—But I wiſh I could ſee this Harry *Renton!* or what would you think, if I ſhould try and turn the affections of Lord *Elmor?* Would

not that be meritorious? By doing this I ſhould eaſe the heart of my friend *Fanny*, make his lordſhip again reliſh the pleaſures of life, and, what would be moſt delightful, have the pleaſure of ſending "The Counteſs "of *Elmor's* compliments to Miſs "*Nancy Floyd*, begs to ſee her this "evening at her card aſſembly." And then to have it inſerted in the news papers, "This morning, at "her houſe, in *St. James's Square*, "the Right Honourable, the Coun-"teſs of *Elmor*, was ſafely delivered "of a ſon and heir, to the great "joy of that noble family. The "ſquare is all laid with ſtraw, and, "it is hoped no carriage will drive "through precipitately, till her lady-"ſhip is out of danger." Would not this be charming? Well, poſi-tively, *Nancy*, I muſt be in love with

with Lord *Elmor.* You'll ſay, I warrant, I have no title to look ſo high; that, as Mr. *Cathcart's* daughter, I ſhall be very well off, if I get a ſpruce haberdaſher, with his pockets ſtuffed with patterns. Huſh, *Nancy*, for, though it may come to this at laſt, I muſt keep myſelf in the way of fortune, for at leaſt a year or two; and then, if nothing better ſhould offer, a ſmile from a lady of my figure, will, at any time, make a conqueſt of one of theſe, and, with a few years œconomy, we ſhall be able to ſet up our chariot, my deary and I lolling at our eaſe, and rolling about on *Sundays*, as comfortable as can be. I am reſolved, at any rate, not to be an old maid, though I am a great deal better reconciled to that ſtate, ſince I am become ſo fond of my aunt *Nell.* Do you know I have

commended couſin *Polly* ſo much to her, that ſhe is perſuaded ſhe will make an excellent companion for her in the winter evenings? I told her (by the bye, it was a contrivance) that *Polly* uſed to be praiſing her, and telling me what a beauty ſhe had been, and how many gentlemen of diſtinction had almoſt broke their hearts upon her account. "Indeed," returned my aunt, "*Polly* told you "nothing but the truth—I think I will "invite her to *Caſtleton*. *Polly* was, I "remember, a very good-natured "girl, but never handſome."

Is not this ſome good done ſince I came into the country? Well, *Nancy*, I really think we ought to examine ourſelves once or twice a year, and ſee what ſervices we have done to our fellow-creatures. It is, ſurely, in moſt peoples power, ſome way or other,

other, to lend their neighbour a lift. What a ſad reflection muſt it be, in our ſerious moments, to find, on examination, that we have done nothing but ate, drank and been merry? And, perhaps, what is worſe, have aſſiſted in ſcandalizing ſome innocent creature of our own ſex.

This reflection, my dear *Nancy*, occurred to me from a viſit I made yeſterday with my aunt, to a family in the neighbourhood. The head of it is Mr. *Manly*, who has a wife and two daughters, agreeable enough, but not handſome. There were, beſides, the three Miſs *Sharpiſh's*, whom I remember you and I drank tea with once, at Miſs *Lloyd's*. They were juſt come from *London*, and had a world of chit-chat. The eldeſt Miſs *Sharpiſh* piques herſelf much on being a woman of faſhion, and can't

bear anybody that is in the leaſt degree vulgar. The diſcourſe, as it naturally does, amongſt us fine ladies, began on the faſhions. "Lady *Love-*
"*rule*," ſaid Miſs *Sharpiſh*, "had the
"ſweeteſt flounce on her petticoat
"ever was ſeen. Lard, you would
"have died for it! I think, it was
"the firſt *Sunday* in the month we
"ſaw her ladyſhip in the *Park*; and
"la, ſiſter, don't you remember
"what a monſtrous ſack Lady *Mackſ-*
"*worth* had on? Indeed, Miſs *Manly*,
"had you ſeen her, you would have
"died with laughing. Such a vulgar
"fancy! But you know her ladyſhip
"is but lately commenced a woman
"of faſhion, and it cannot be expect-
"ed ſhe can have acquired a taſte
"yet. They tell me, her mother
"was about binding her apprentice
"to a mantua-maker, when my lord

"ſaw

" ſaw her, accidentally, coming out
" of *Monmouth Street*, where ſhe had
" been purchaſing a gown. He was
" pleaſed, it ſeems, with the looks
" of Miſs, ſo followed her home,
" where he offered the mother, who
" was a neceſſitous widow, a hun-
" dred a year, and the daughter a
" handſome ſettlement, to have her
" into keeping. Miſs, it ſeems, fell
" a crying, and pretended to take it
" as a prodigious affront. The old
" woman firſt railed on my lord, for
" offering to ruin her child; then
" wheedled and coaxed him ſo, that,
" in a month or two, his lordſhip
" was drawn into a marriage. How
" cunning theſe low people are!
" They ſay, indeed, ſhe makes a
" tolerable wife, but then any one
" may ſee the creature has been raiſed
" from nothing. But, Miſs *Manly*,

" have I told you yet (I believe not)
" that Miſs—bleſs me, I can't re-
" member her name—Miſs—Miſs—
" Miſs *Weſt* (now I have it) is either
" gone or going into keeping?"

I was willing to hear her conclude her ſtory of Miſs *Weſt*, ſo only interrupted her a little, by aſking, " What " Miſs *Weſt?*" " *Sally Weſt*," ſaid ſhe, " I think is her name: her father " had a ſmall place at court. Miſs, " it ſeems, was thought tolerably " genteel, and, I ſuppoſe, imagined " her gentility would make her for- " tune. I don't know how it was, " but ſhe got herſelf, ſome way or " other, always thruſt in amongſt " people of faſhion, and, I ſuppoſe, " began to think ſhe really was one " herſelf: when, laſt winter, her fa- " ther died, and left her without a " ſhilling. Believe me, Miſs *Manly*,

" I ſaw

" I ſaw her, about a fortnight before " his death, dreſſed in a ſuit of laces " that could not coſt leſs than five " guineas a yard. The dainty fin- " gered dame, you may believe, can- " not work, ſo, you know, what can " ſhe do?"

Oh! *Nancy*, how do you think I had patience? " Good God!" ſaid I, " madam, is this all the ground you " have for defaming a young lady?" " A young lady!" repeated ſhe, with a toſs of her head. " Yes," returned I, " a young lady, I ſay, who, " though ſhe has, early in life, met " with misfortunes; though her fa- " ther was not dignified by a title, " and though his income was but " ſmall, yet brought up his daughter " in ſuch principles, that ſhe has " courage to bear up under her diffi- " culties, and, I know, would rather

" die, than be what you imagine. " The lace you mention was, to my " knowledge, an imitation of point, " and her own work." Here Miſs *Sharpiſh* bridled, and ſaid, " for her " part ſhe knew nothing about the " girl—ſhe had only ſaid what ſhe " heard, and, perhaps not all that " neither." " Not all, madam! " What could you inſinuate worſe " than what you have done? Speak " it out; for I defy you to ſay any " thing bad of Miſs *Weſt*, but muſt " appear to have as little foundation " as what you have ſaid already." I believe, *Nancy*, my face was red with anger, and it was with great difficulty I could command my tears. " You ſeem to be angry, madam," ſaid ſhe, " I am ſorry I ſhould have " ſaid any thing to diſpleaſe you; " but when young ladies once loſe

" their

" their character, you know, it is the
" ſame thing whether they are inno-
" cent or not. People of reputation,
" madam, ought, certainly, to avoid
" giving cauſe for reproach; and, I
" likewiſe think, when people aſpire to
" what they have no title to, it is but
" juſt, their pride ſhould be humbled."
" And, according to juſtice, madam,"
replied I, " what puniſhment,
" does that perſon deſerve, who
" can wantonly traduce the cha-
" racter of the innocent, and who
" can even endeavour to throw a
" ſhade on thoſe who have given the
" ſtrongeſt proofs of their virtue?
" Lady *Mackſworth*, and the good old
" woman her mother, could not eſ-
" cape you. And, ſuppoſing Mr.
" *Weſt* had been to blame in bring-
" ing up his daughter with a taſte for
" high life, is there no difference to

" be

" be made between a fault and a " crime? In my opinion, they muſt " have a very ſuſpicious character of " their own, who find it neceſſary to " preſerve it, by leſſening the merit " of their neighbour." I believe, *Nancy*, I was a little too ſevere, but I could not help it. Miſs *Sharpiſh's* fan performed the angry flutter to admiration. " I don't know what you " mean, madam," ſaid ſhe; " my re- " putation is above your malice." Here Miſs *Manly* interpoſed, and begged no more might be ſaid upon the ſubject; and Mrs. *Manly* and my aunt coming in, a ſtop was put to farther altercation; but we did not ſeem to eye one another very cordially for the remainder of the evening.

Is it not very hard, *Nancy*, that our ſex ſhould ſuffer ſo much from one another? I doubt not but many

an

an innocent young creature has been ruined, by finding her company ſhunned by thoſe who once looked on her as their equal; and for no other cauſe than that of misfortune. It is, when our ſex, who are uſed to genteel life, are deſerted by people of diſtinction, that the men dare to inſult us. But I have no fear of this kind for *Sally Weſt*. Her principles are too well founded to be ſhaken. Beſides, ſhe has ſomething about her ſo modeſt, that I ſhould think her behaviour would awe the greateſt libertine.

Pray, my dear, go to her, and offer her my beſt wiſhes. Let me know, in your next, what her friends intend to do for her. I wonder if ſhe intends, as ſhe propoſed, to enter into buſineſs. I am afraid ſhe is not cut out for a buſtling life; and if the reſt of her acquaintance ſhould, like Miſs *Sharpiſh*,

ſhun

ſhun and rail at her, it will be next to a miracle if ſhe ſhould ſucceed.

I am thinking, if ſhe is not very anxious about trade, I will have it propoſed to my father, to invite her to live at our houſe. You know he was very fond of Mr. *Weſt*, and had always a good opinion of *Sally*. You may believe I ſhould be very happy in ſuch a companion: beſides, it would infallibly ſtop the tongues of thoſe ſqueamiſh ladies, who are afraid to countenance her, friendleſs and unprotected as ſhe ſeems to be at preſent; and I don't know, *Nancy*, if her going into buſineſs would ſilence them. I can't but think it is a very bad cuſtom, that women of buſineſs ſhould be ſo little reſpected as they are. If a young man, though of ever ſuch low parentage, receives a good education, and behaves himſelf well,

he

he is a companion for a gentleman; while our weaker ſex, who need encouragement and advice from thoſe above us, are left to climb the uphill of life, while every little difficulty, ſtaggering our reſolution, is pulling us down. Who can inſure riches? Or who can be certain, but their favourite daughter, bred up, perhaps, with all the delicacy imaginable, may meet with all theſe inconveniencies? and, what is worſe, be liable to affronts from men of fortune, who would not venture to inſult them, were they taken notice of by people of diſtinction of their own ſex, as much as men of buſineſs are by theirs? In my weak opinion, it would be doing good to the country in general, was every young woman, who has but a ſmall, or no fortune, to be ambitious of applying herſelf to a buſineſs,

buſineſs, that would not only keep her from being dependent on her friends, but would make her as much reſpected as the beſt of them.

I wiſh, *Nancy*, I was Lady *Elmor!* Don't you think a woman of my rank might have influence enough to bring in this cuſtom? Well, my dear, for the good of our ſex in general, and for *Sally* in particular, I ſhall certainly try to make a conqueſt of my lord.

What a long letter have I wrote, and not a word of my *Fanny!* She is in good health, as are all the family of the *Renton's.* Sir *William* has had a letter from his ſon *Harry:* He is expected home the end of next week. Lady *Renton* has aſked the favour of my aunt to allow me to ſpend ten days with them, which ſhe was ſo good as to grant; ſo I go there to-morrow. My next ſhall be dated from

from *Renton Park.* Nothing material has happened amongſt us, ſince I informed you that I have not been entruſted with any more love affairs. You may expect, in my next, a deſcription of this wonderful *Harry*; for, to be ſure, he muſt, like the reſt of the family, in my eyes, border on perfection. But what have I to do with what he is? Are not my affections unalterably fixed on a coronet?

Adieu.

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Miſs FLOYD, *to Miſs* CATHCART.

June 18.

I NEED not repeat how pleaſed I am always with my dear *Clarinda's* agreeable letters. Your reproving Miſs *Sharpiſh*, in the manner you mention,

mention, delighted me highly. I only think you ſaid not ſo much as ſhe deſerved. What affectation, to forget our friend *Sally*! But, I ſuppoſe, as it is faſhionable for the fine gentlemen to be ſhort-ſighted, ſo the fine ladies have brought in the faſhion of a ſhort memory. I agree with you, in every particular, of the real good it would do, the encouraging our ſex to be uſeful by looking on buſineſs as genteel. Yet, I am afraid, it is more to be wiſhed than expected.

But to eaſe you, my dear, as to our friend *Sally*. She is on the point of being better diſpoſed of than Miſs *Sharpiſh*, I dare ſay, with all her faſhionable airs, can ever expect. I know this piece of news will rejoice you; ſo, not to keep you in ſuſpence, know, matters are ſo well agreed

agreed on, that this day ſeven-night ſhe will be Lady *Forreſt*. Sir *Robert* firſt ſaw her when ſhe accompanied Lady *Pritchard* to *Bath*. I ſuppoſe you'll remember her talking a great deal about him, though ſhe never hinted of a courtſhip being betwixt them. You and I thought we had all her ſecrets; but, it ſeems, ſhe kept the main one to herſelf. She tells me, that ſhe was always doubtful of Sir *Robert's* conſtancy, as ſhe knew every art would be uſed by his friends, to prevent his marrying her; ſo, in caſe ſhe had been obliged to wear the willow, ſhe thought it beſt to keep it as much a ſecret as poſſible. However, Sir *Robert* has behaved like a man of honour, to a girl, who, I'm ſure, in every reſpect, but that of fortune, deſerves him. His mother, who was the only

one

one he was anxious not to offend, ſaid ſo much, that Sir *Robert*, who has ever been an obedient ſon, was reſolved not to marry till her ladyſhip died; an event ſoon expected, as, it ſeems, ever ſince Sir *Adam's* death, ſhe has been in a declining ſtate of health. But, on hearing the ſituation *Sally* was left in, by her father's death, the young gentleman went, and flung himſelf on his knees to his mother, begging ſhe would conſent to his marriage with *Sally*; and added, that, out of obedience to her, he had put a conſtraint on his inclination, which the preſent ſituation of the young lady made it impoſſible to do any longer, without making him the moſt miſerable man on earth. The good-natured old lady, who would never hear him on this ſubject before, could not help being touched with the filial duty, and

generous

generous ſentiments, of her ſon: ſhe therefore raiſed him, and taking him in her arms, deſired him to make himſelf happy as ſoon as he pleaſed. The overjoyed baronet ordered his chariot directly, and flew, like lightning, to his miſtreſs. He found her in the greateſt affliction for the loſs of her indulgent father; and all he could ſay could not comfort her. He has been ever ſince preſſing her to marriage; but, till laſt week, ſhe would never conſent to fix a day. She has often intended to tell me about it; but, ſhe ſays, ſhe always delayed it, expecting a better opportunity, and, till the day ſhe revealed the ſecret to me, there was ſomething or other prevented her.

Sir *Robert's* viſits, I ſuppoſe, have given riſe to the ill-natured ſtory of Miſs *Sharpiſh*. Now, thank God! it will be all over; at leaſt, as to doing her

her any prejudice; for, very probably, ſhe will now tell it in the ſame way as ſhe told of Lady *Mackſworth's* marriage.

Sally regrets much, that you are in the country; but, as Sir *Robert's* ſeat is in your aunt's neighbourhood, ſhe will ſee you directly after the marriage. I have one piece of news ſtill more to give you; and that is, I am to be one of the bride-maids, and to go down in the country along with her; ſo you ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing me; and, in return for that pleaſure, I ſhall expect you will introduce me to all the family of the *Renton's*. I ſhall only ſtay about eight days; for my mother will not conſent to my ſtaying longer, as *Polly* has a little of her ſtomach complaints.

I had a viſit, yeſterday, from your couſin *Betſy*. She told me ſhe had a letter

letter from you laſt week. It is amazing to me how you find time to write ſo much. But I imagine, when once this *Harry* appears, you will ſhorten your letters.

As to Lord *Elmor*, I don't think you have any chance of getting him. Not that I doubt the power of your charms; but, I am afraid, *Fanny* has taken too ſtrong a hold of his heart, for the ſhort time you have to ſtay in the country, to be able to turn him. My mother and *Polly* ſend their love to you. I know you will chearfully excuſe the ſhortneſs of this, when you conſider how much I muſt, at preſent, be taken up with *Sally*. Her couſin *Bolton* has preſented her with two hundred guineas to buy wedding cloaths. It is juſt as I expected. I adviſed her to write and acquaint him with her

marriage, but ſhe was very averſe to it, as he behaved ſo ill at her father's death, never offering to adviſe or aſſiſt her in the leaſt. She came flying to me as ſoon as ſhe got a return to her letter. It was ſo friendly and ſo kind, you can't imagine. God forgive me for miſbelieving his good intentions. He ſays, that from the moment of her father's death, he intended to give her two hundred pounds, to begin the world with; that he had juſt ſat down to write to her uncle, and ſome other of her friends, to ſee what they propoſed to do for her, when he was agreeably prevented, by receiving her letter. His wife and he will come to town, he ſays, directly, on the joyful occaſion; hopes ſhe will excuſe the ſmallneſs of the preſent, for, as a man in trade, he cannot venture to make

make it ſuch as he could wiſh; writes a great deal in praiſe of Sir *Robert*, of whom he has heard a large character; is very happy at the thought of being allied to him, and ſubſcribes himſelf her ever affectionate couſin.

Can you think, *Clarinda*, that a man, who could let ſix months paſs without writing or coming near her, though in town, intended what he ſays? I own, I am not charitable enough to think it poſſible. I, at firſt, thought ſhe ſhould not accept the ſum he offered; but, on farther conſideration, I began to think we have no reaſon to imagine that all our friends will ſtand by us in adverſity. Mr. *Bolton*, like many others, ſeems more ſuſceptible of joy than grief; as his preſent is a certain proof of his rejoicing at her good fortune. There may be a little pride

in it too; but I think it would be ill-natured to reject his preſent, as, at the ſame time, it would be rejecting his offered friendſhip. We ought to forgive and forget; and though we cannot always obtain favour, it is always in our power to endeavour to deſerve it.

But I have lengthened out this letter more than I ought. *Sally* will be, by this time, quite impatient. I promiſed to be with her by twelve, and 'tis now within ten minutes of one. A double knock—I'll lay my life 'tis her—her very ſelf; ſhe wants to ſee what I've wrote, but I wont allow her. However, I have given her leave to add a poſtſcript.

P. S. My dear *Clarinda*, this ſaucy girl wont allow me to read over what ſhe has wrote. I begin to ſuſpect ſhe has ſome ſecret of yours; and as I have

have tranſgreſſed myſelf, in concealing my matrimonial ſcheme till it be near concluded, I muſt ſay the leſs; nay, ſhe wont allow me to write another word.

Miſs *Floyd's* compliments to Miſs *Cathcart*, begs ſhe will excuſe Miſs *Weſt* from writing any more, her ſpirits being in ſuch a flurry, on the near approach of the awful ceremony, that ſhe has taken a full quarter of an hour to ſqueeze out the above few lines. She hopes to ſee Miſs *Cathcart* at *Forreſt Abbey*, on *Tueſday* ſevennight, where her ladyſhip expects to make up for paſt concealments, and to get all the particulars of the important ſecret in Miſs *Floyd's* letter.

Well, *Clarinda*, be it as ſhe ſays—Be ſure, my dear, to come.

Yours, affectionately, { SALLY WEST. / NANCY FLOYD.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* ROBERTS.

June 30.

MAY my dear *Betſy*, *Nancy*, *Polly Floyd*, and *Clarinda Cathcart*, be all as happily ſettled in the honourable ſtate of wedlock, before this time twelve month, as is the agreeable *Sally Weſt*, now Lady *Forreſt!*

Well, my dear *Betſy*, I received your commands from Miſs *Floyd*, and I'm ſet down to obey them. But don't expect me to be very particular, as the hurry I am in makes it impoſſible.

Lord bleſs me! What a fine thing it is to be married! Such compliments! Such congratulations! Such fine cloaths! And, when one can add, ſuch a handſome fellow for a huſband!

huſband! Are we not led to cry out, Happy, thrice happy and fortunate *Sally?*

On *Monday* morning I received a card from Sir *Robert* and her ladyſhip, deſiring my company at dinner. I dreſſed myſelf in my beſt, as you may ſuppoſe, and away I drove in Sir *William Renton's* chariot. I was no ſooner got into the court-yard, than Sir *Robert*, my lady and *Nancy*, hurried down to meet me. Sir *Robert* was ſtepping up to hand me out, when my dear *Sally* came running to me with open arms, and neither of us could ſpeak, for ſome moments, for joy. I was immediately conducted up to the dining-room, where I congratulated them in form, and wiſhed them joy.

You have ſeen Sir *Robert*, ſo I need not deſcribe him. I think him ex-

tremely agreeable and frank. He told me, "that he had heard there "was a celebrated beauty in the "neighbourhood, one Miſs *Clarinda* "*Cathcart*; but as his heart was pre-"engaged, he never had curioſity "enough to excite him to go to ſee "her; but, had he known ſhe had "been an intimate of his *Sally's*, he "ſhould have been acquainted with "her long ago." "I ſuppoſe," ſaid I, "you was afraid to truſt yourſelf "in the way of temptation? Perhaps, "had you found that fame had done "the lady no more than juſtice, poor "Lady *Forreſt*, by this time, might "have been ſitting in ſome ſhady "grove, repeating the lines of *Cha-*"*mont*;

"Truſt not a man; he is, by nature, falſe,
"Diſſembling, ſubtle, cruel and inconſtant."

"But

"But my *Sally* knows," ſaid Sir *Robert*, "that I talked of love with cau-
"tion." "Well," ſaid I, "and I
"ſuppoſe it was owing to that cau-
"tion, that you would not truſt your-
"ſelf with the ſight of a new beauty."
"I find," ſaid he, "Miſs *Cathcart*
"has an indifferent opinion of the
"conſtancy of our ſex. I ſhall ſuſ-
"pect, Miſs *Floyd*, (turning to her)
"ſhe has been forſaken." "Not I,
"upon my honour, Sir *Robert*. And
"I am determined never to let any
"man make an impreſſion on my
"heart, till the knot is tied; by
"which means I ſhall run little riſk
"of being forſaken: For, I believe,
"you men, for moſt part, as the
"ſong ſays,

"As ſoon as you've melted the ice in our breaſt,
"The heat of your paſſion that moment's
"decreas'd."

"Beſides, I intend to judge of the "qualifications of my intended ſpouſe "with my eyes open. People in "love, you know, are always blind." "What do you ſay to that, my dear," ſaid Sir *Robert*, turning to Lady *Forreſt*; "I am afraid Miſs *Cathcart* does "not approve of my choice." "Nor "of mine," returned her ladyſhip; "for, I own, I was in love." "Nay, "then," ſaid I, "I hope you have "both been more lucky than wiſe. "*Cupid*, I dare ſay, ſometimes blinds "people for their good; but I have "ſo great an opinion of my own "judgment, that I have no mind to "run the riſk of drawing a blank, "when I can make certain of a prize." "But, pray, *Clarinda*," ſaid *Nancy*, "how do you think you will keep "clear of this paſſion more than others, "who, perhaps, thought themſelves

"as

" as ſecure againſt its attacks as you
" do?" " Nothing in the world more
" eaſy, *Nancy*," I replied. " In the
" firſt place, I never talk ſeriouſly
" with a man above ten minutes at
" a time. I can ſing, laugh, and
" talk with thoſe triffling fellows,
" who, to every pretty girl they meet,
" ſigh and look tender, and act
" over all the little fooleries of
" love, without either of us be-
" ing in the leaſt danger. But ſup-
" poſe, I ſhould fall in company,
" two or three times, with a more
" dangerous gentleman, a *Caſtalio*,
" or a *Romeo*; and then ſuppoſe, he
" ſhould begin to be a little parti-
" cular in his glances to the fair
" *Clarinda*, I ſhould immediately
" make private enquiries into his
" eſtate and character, and if they
" ſhould anſwer my expectation (you

"ſee I am no coquet) I would give "him a fair opportunity to declare "his paſſion, and then bluſh and "ſay—I am at the diſpoſal of my "father."

Sir *Robert* laughed. "I ſee you "are to be very prudent in your "choice," ſaid he, "but how do "you know if love will come after-"wards?" "As to that, there is no "fear, I replied, I have naturally "a feeling heart, and this makes me "ſo cautious, where I dread danger." "But do you think," ſaid *Nancy*, "that a man of ſenſe will fall in "love with outward charms? At "leaſt ſo as to propoſe marriage, "without hearing you talk ſeriouſly, "and without knowing you are any "more than a pretty piece of vanity "and folly?" "Oh, your ſervant, "madam," ſaid I, "you truſt to

"your

"your *inward* charms. Well, I "hope, you will meet with a *Juba*; "for my part, I truſt entirely to a "ſet of features and complexion.

"Let wiſdom boaſt, 'tis all in vain,
"An empire o'er the mind,
"'Tis beauty, beauty holds the chain,
"And triumphs o'er mankind."

Thus, *Betſy*, did I rattle away, with my uſual freedom, when old Lady *Forreſt* appearing, put a ſtop to the glibneſs of my tongue. She is an agreeable, decent-looking old lady, and, I believe, in her youth, has been handſome. She has a ſickly look, but is ſo fond of her daughter-in-law, that, Sir *Robert* ſays, ſhe ſeems to have got new life.

There came to dinner (for I was there early) Lord and Lady *Trent*, (her ladyſhip is aunt to Sir *Robert*) Lord *Edgar*, Lord *Elmor*, Sir *Walter Haly*,

Haly, and his lady, Capt. *Frize*, Lady *Betty Williams*, Miſs *Frize*, the two Miſs *Lockhart's*, all relations of Sir *Robert's*. There were, beſides, *Sally's* uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. *Cox*, her Couſin *Bolton* and his wife, *Nancy*, and your humble ſervant. I aſſure you we made a very elegant appearance; but I refer you to *Nancy* for the dreſſes. I don't know how it was, but I had no notion of there being ſuch a company, or, I believe I ſhould have petitioned my father for a new ſuit: you may ſuppoſe the entertainment, and every thing elſe, was ſuitable to the occaſion. We had muſick all the time of dinner. After dinner, they that could ſing and play, joined in concert. We were ſtopped in the midſt of this entertainment, by muſick from without. We all went to the windows, where we ſaw

Sir

Sir *Robert's* tenants, with their wives and daughters, dreſſed like ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes. As ſoon as we threw up the windows, they made their obeiſance, and then the young ones joined in a dance. After that, a handſome young fellow, with his wife, (who had been married but a few days before) ſung, *Now the nuptial knot is ty'd*, &c. Sir *Robert*, it ſeems, had ordered an entertainment for them in the great hall, whither (after giving a loud huzza, with "Long live Sir "*Robert Forreſt*, and his happy con- "ſort") they all retired. After this, to my great ſurpriſe, we were uſhered up to a very handſome gallery, finely illuminated, and, on our entrance, ſoft muſick was heard as if at a diſtance. We had not time to expreſs our wonder, when a partition was drawn, and there appeared many of the firſt rate muſicians

muſicians from *London*. Miſs *Brent* and *Beard* came forward, and ſung a charming new ſong, compoſed for the occaſion: *Nancy* will give you the lines ſet, as they were ſung. In ſhort, we had a very fine concert. After that, the bride and Lord *Edgar* opened the ball; then Sir *Robert* with Lady *Trent*, Lord *Trent* with Lady *Betty Williams*, Sir *Walter Haly* with *Nancy*, (you have them in order as we danced) Lord *Elmor* with my ladyſhip, Mr. *Bolton* with the eldeſt Miſs *Lockhart*, Capt. *Frize* with the youngeſt, and Mr. *Cox* with Miſs *Frize*. Lady *Haly*, Mrs. *Bolton*, and Mrs. *Cox* ſat with Lady Dowager.

Now, *Betſy*, tho' I have been more particular than I intended, yet I have not given you one word of the pretty ſallies of wit that paſſed between Lord *Edgar*, Capt. *Frize*, *Nancy*, the young-

eſt

eſt Miſs *Lockhart*, and your humble ſervant. Such charming gaiety!— My partner, poor man, is unfortunately in love. I wonder what the deuce brought him to a wedding! But, I ſuppoſe, like me, he expected no mirth. Would you believe it, *Betſy?* all my charms had no more effect on him, than if I had been as old and as grey-headed as your grandmother. Old *Cox*, in a whiſper, told me, I had danced all the ſpirits from my partner. "What do you think, "my lord?" ſaid I; "Mr. *Cox* was "aſking me, if I danced with a "Quaker." "He has no reaſon to "think ſo," ſaid his lordſhip, with a half ſmile, "he has not ſeen me yet "moved by the ſpirit." "True, my "lord," returned I, "but he is in ex-"pectation of it." "I am afraid, "madam," replied he, with a heavy ſigh,

ſigh, "he will be diſappointed." "Zounds!" ſaid Sir *Walter Haly*, "*Elmor*, you look as grim as if you "were chief mourner at a funeral." Well, it is a ſad thing, *Betſy*, to be in love. His lordſhip had no reliſh for jeſts; yet, in ſpite of my dull partner, I was all life and ſpirit.

The ball broke up about four in the morning. I ſent a card to Miſs *Renton*, to let her know I ſhould not be home till next day, and, indeed, it was next evening before I returned.

Lord *Edgar*, Lord *Elmor* and Capt. *Frize*, ſaw me home in Sir *Robert's* coach; they were to return to *Forreſt Abbey*, where we left all the reſt of the company, except Sir *Walter* and Lady *Haly*, who went away in the morning: the reſt did not go till next day.

I have

I have been ſeveral times there ſince, but not on a public day, except once. They ſee company three days in the week. I went with the *Renton* family and my aunt. Such a croud! I could fill a whole ſheet to give you their names. I uſed to imagine, that people went into the country, after their marriage, to be private; but, from what I have now ſeen, I think they may as well go to the long room at *Bath*, for that purpoſe. Both Sir *Robert* and her ladyſhip are heartily tired; but they hope it will ſoon be over.

Lady *Forreſt* inſiſts, when the time is expired that I was to ſtay at my aunt's, ſhe will have me to ſpend two months at *Forreſt Abbey*, and go to town with her at *Chriſtmas*. She propoſed writing to my father to aſk his permiſſion. You may believe I ſhould

have

have no objection, but I don't think it will be granted, as my father will certainly want me to ſee Lady *Evergreen*, before ſhe leaves the country. *Nancy* goes to town on *Friday*—Her mother and *Polly* would not be without her any longer, they tell her, for the world—I wonder how they will part with her to a huſband!

I am to continue a fortnight longer at *Renton Park*. My aunt, though very fond of me, chearfully conſented. She ſays, ſhe remembers the time of her youth, and can't think of confining me to the company of an old woman, when I can be ſo much better entertained by good young folks, like myſelf. Good woman! Heaven bleſs her!—And now, my dear couſin, let me ſee an inſtance of your gratitude, by ſending me an epiſtle ſix times the length of mine. Remember

ber how much I am taken up in going betwixt *Caſtleton* and *Forreſt Abbey*, *Renton Park*, and many other places, too tedious to mention: whereas you have nothing to do but to ſit two or three hours in the day and read to your grandmother, and in the reſt of it do as you pleaſe; ſo that you don't ramble abroad. But you are really a good girl, *Betſy*, to confine yourſelf ſo much on the old lady's account. If we ſhould live to be old and infirm ourſelves, it certainly will be an agreeable reflection to think we have done our duty to our parents; that we always honoured and reſpected them; that we made allowance for their being peeviſh and fretful, and bore it with patience, trying to ſooth and comfort them as much as we could. To do as we would wiſh to be done by, is an excellent

cellent rule. God ſend that, by your example, *Betſy*, I may always make it my endeavour to follow it: So prays

Your ever affectionate couſin,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.
Begun by Miſs CAROLINE RENTON.

July 6.

"YESTERDAY arrived, at the "ſeat of Sir *William Renton*, "Baronet, in *Yorkſhire*, his eldeſt "ſon *Harry Renton* Eſquire, who "has been three years abroad on his "travels, and is returned with every "natural accompliſhment improved "to the greateſt perfection. It is "reported, that the celebrated Miſs

"*Clarinda*

" *Clarinda Cathcart* received a wound " in her heart the ſame day, which " will be incurable; but this laſt piece " of news, 'tis hoped, will prove " falſe." Now, my deareſt *Nancy*, are you not impatient to hear this melancholy report contradicted? Do you think it will be neceſſary to ſend an expreſs, and enquire? I think you had beſt have patience. If there is no truth in it, you will certainly get a letter from the young lady, as uſual. Even though ſhe has got a ſlight wound, ſhe will probably write to her dear friend and companion. But, my dear, if it really be mortal, which heaven forbid!——

Oh, your ſervant, Miſs *Caroline!* What do you think, *Nancy*, of this girl? To ſit down, with the air of a familiar acquaintance of yours, to give you an account of my love for her

her brother! And for what? Becauſe I, out of my natural complaiſance, joined in the partial praiſes, which ſhe thinks proper to beſtow on him. But to ſhew you, if there is a wound, how ſlight it is, I will, as ſhe ſays, write with my own hand, and give you the particulars of the arrival, reception, and many qualifications of this young gentleman, who can be ſuppoſed able to wound the heart of your *Clarinda*.

On *Saturday*, at twelve o'clock, Lady *Cheſter*, Miſs *Renton* and Miſs *Cathcart*, were putting on their hats to go to the *Park*, with Miſs *Nelly Renton*, who had juſt informed them, ſhe had found a thruſh's neſt, and begged they would go and ſee the young ones: I ſay, we were putting on our hats, when *Robert* came running, or rather flying, up ſtairs,

and

and entering the room without any ceremony, with a look of importance mixed with joy, ſaid, " O ladies! my " young maſter will be here preſently " —*Tom* is in the ſtable-yard." Off " flew the hats in a twinkling. Oh *Charlotte!* O *Caroline!* O my dear *Clarinda!* My brother? Where is *Tom?* Where is Sir *William?* Does my mother know? *Fanny*, will you go and ſee? I cannot move—O what ſhall I do? and down ſinks poor *Fanny* in a chair, trembling with joy, her lips quivering, and unable to ſpeak. Here Sir *William* entered. " Compoſe yourſelves, ladies," ſaid he, " *Harry* will not be here this " hour. *Tom* left him at the *Angel* " in *York*, with Lord *Edgar* and *Bob* " *Temple*, who went to meet him. He " diſpatched *Tom* to acquaint us, ſo " don't be in ſuch a flurry; *Charlotte*,

" do you come down to your mother,
" for ſhe, too, is in a flutter." Away went Sir *William* and Lady *Cheſter*. " Bleſs me, *Fanny*," ſaid *Caroline*, " what makes you cry and tremble " ſo?" " Oh, how fooliſh I am," returned *Fanny*; " but I am ſo happy!"—" Nay, *Caroline*," ſaid *Nell*, " you are crying yourſelf, and ſo is " Miſs *Cathcart*. I wonder how people can cry for joy. But I will " leave you, and go meet him. I'll " wager my birds will be flown, before you go to ſee them, and you " might have had time enough. Well, " I don't care, I will now go and meet " my brother. But how ſhall I know " him, though? Oh, I'll aſk his ſervant what colour his coat is, and " the colour of his chariot"—and away ſcampered *Nell*.

Now

Now behold three weeping virgins, mute, ſtarting and ſtaring at the noiſe of a mouſe behind the wainſcot. One o'clock ſtruck, no word; two o'clock, enter *Nell.* "I can't ſee him, and I "have walked and walked till I am "ſo hungry, that I muſt have ſome-"thing to eat. My father is gone u p to the balcony to look through "his teleſcope; I'll go up firſt, and "ſee if he'll let me look." [*Exit Nell.*
"He certainly can't be long, now—
"Huſh! I hear a noiſe. *Nell* on the "ſtair-caſe: *Caroline*, *Caroline*, *Fanny*, "tell my mother I ſee ſomething "black at the two-mile ſtone; it muſt "be him; my father ſees it, too; I'll "go again and meet him: Oh, there "he is, there he is; the chariot is in "the avenue! the chariot is in the "avenue!"

Now, *Nancy*, muſt I ſtop, and not pretend to deſcribe what I could only give you by ſuppoſition. Two of the weeping virgins vaniſhed in a moment, and the mourning *Clarinda* was left till the clock ſtruck four, envying their happineſs, and wiſhing fate had been ſo kind as to have bleſſed her with brothers and ſiſters. The clock ſtruck four, I tell you; Enter *Caroline*. "Oh! my dear *Cla-* "*rinda!* I hope you will excuſe — "I am ſo pleaſed that"—"That *Harry* "is come. No, I'll never excuſe that, "*Caroline*, till I ſee him. How do you "think I have had patience all this "time?" "Oh, my dear, come "down ſtairs; we have juſt this mo- "ment told him that you are here; "but Lord *Edgar* had told him be- "fore. Come, come, you are well "enough."—"Bleſs me! let me place

"this

" this patch; you don't know I have " a deſign on your brother." " Well, " *Clarinda*, you ſhall have my wiſhes " to ſucceed;" and down we tripped both to the dining-room. The door opens. Obſerve my air, *Nancy*; the patch placed to advantage, my pink ſack with a delightful ſwim.

Sir *William*. *Harry*, Miſs *Clarinda Cathcart*; Miſs *Catchcart*, my ſon *Harry*. Salute.

Harry. I am extremely happy to have the pleaſure of ſeeing and being made acquainted with a niece of my good friend Mr. *Cathcart*.

Sir *William*. Sit down, Miſs *Cathcart*; ſit down, *Harry*; you will value *Clarinda* on her own account, when you are once acquainted; we muſt be all joy this night. Miſs *Cathcart*, you'll give us the flower of the foreſt, won't you?

Miſs *Cathcart*. Whenever Sir *William* commands, I'm ready to obey.

Sir *William*. That's a good girl—. But let us have dinner.

Now, *Nancy*, imagine us all ſeated. See the delighted parents, with looks of love, liſtening with pleaſure to every word of their dear ſon; ſee the affectionate ſiſters, unable to eat a bit, in ſilent admiration, ſometimes beſtowing an enquiring look at *Clarinda*, as if to aſk, did ſhe ever ſee a more compleat young gentleman; and ſee the fair *Clarinda*, pleaſed with the happineſs of all around, eating her dinner heartily, and anſwering the ſiſters with her eyes; extremely handſome, upon my word! You ſee all this; and pray what do you think you ſee more? You think you ſee the happy, unſuſpecting *Clarinda*, by an undeſigned ſoft look of this dangerous

gerous *Harry*, wounded to the heart in a moment; while ſhe, with all her charms, has not been able to make the leaſt impreſſion on his. Boaſt no more of thy ſecurity, unfortunate maid! Cruel deſtiny! Is there no cure for hopeleſs love? Abſence. No, O no; 'tis impoſſible; his dear idea will haunt her imagination.

Time. No; every day will add new weight to her ſorrows, and the ſilent—Stop, *Nancy*, no more of your ſuppoſitions. Though *Cupid*, you ſay, owes me a ſpite, with all his wiles he has never been able to catch me at a diſadvantage.

I fancy, had I been a man, I ſhould have been an excellent fencer. What a number of duels I ſhould have fought! No man durſt, accidentally, tread on my toe, or caſt the leaſt amorous glance on my miſtreſs, but I would immediately

have ſent him a challenge. And then, when I had been in a drawing-room, with a ſelect company of fair ladies, and fine gentlemen, and the reigning toaſt, the beautiful *Partheniſſa*, was deſired to ſing; ſee the envy of the *Petits-Matires*, when the fair creatures, with eyes ſparkling with pleaſure, would have looked at me, while the ſweet ſyren warbles forth, *None but the brave, none but the brave, none but the brave deſerve the fair.*

But don't you think, *Nancy*, it requires a great deal of courage, and a great deal of art, to guard againſt ſo many inviſible powers that war againſt us every moment? Is it not, at leaſt, a ſign of more judgment to guard againſt them, than, for trifles, to deſtroy one another?

Bleſs me! how inſignificant do theſe heroes appear in compariſon of ſuch

ſuch a heroine as I am? I, who can parry with the arrows of *Cupid*, can keep all my paſſions (which are given me for ſervants) in ſubjection, when theſe mighty heroes are often obliged to ſhrink under, and confeſs them maſters!

But I ramble. You muſt, you ſay, have a deſcription of *Harry*. Well, to begin; he is rather taller than the middle ſize—But, now I think on it, I won't deſcribe him. You will ſee him, *Nancy*, and I am certain I could not do him juſtice. Beſides, as *Pope* ſays,

'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call;
But the joint force, and full reſult of all.

Let it ſuffice, then, to ſay, as his ſiſter *Fanny* is a compleat beauty, and has all the graces that can adorn one of our ſex, without the leaſt coquetry;

ſo her brother *Harry*, with a graceful air, and manly countenance, has quite the look of a man of faſhion, without the leaſt degree of foppery. To all appearance, he is a dutiful ſon, an affectionate brother, and that, I think, is all I can ſay from the ſmall acquaintance I have of him.

You expect my letters are now to be ſhort; ſo, without apology, I will draw to a concluſion. Lady *Forreſt* tells me, ſhe has wrote to you, ſo I need ſay nothing of her. Lady *Cheſter*, *Caroline*, and *Fanny*, beg I'll preſent their compliments to you. They ſuppoſe you a very valuable girl, *Nancy*, becauſe you are a favourite of mine. There's an inducement to you to do all you can to continue in my good graces. If you don't write to me regularly, depend upon it you pay the forfeit. Remember how fine

ſpun

ſpun are the cords of female friendſhip, which the leaſt touch can break. Offer my compliments and beſt wiſhes where you know they are due, and believe me, while the cord continues firm,

Yours, unalterably,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

P. S. My aunt has been here to ſee and congratulate us on the arrival of young *Harry*. "Does not he," whiſpered my aunt, as we ſtood at the window, "anſwer what I ſaid of "him?" "Yes, madam, but I ſhall "long to ſee the captain." "What's "that, Mrs. *Cathcart*," ſays *Harry*, "Miſs *Clarinda* is ſaying about the "captain?" "Why," returned I, "I was thinking, Mr. *Renton*, if a "peace ſhould come, we ſhall be in

" great danger of robberies; ſo, I " was ſaying, if I ſhould be here at " that time, I would be glad the cap- " tain were at home to protect us." " Mad girl!" ſaid my aunt. Says *Harry*, " So, you would be afraid to " truſt yourſelf with" — Lord bleſs me! my poſtſcript will be longer than my letter, if I go on with my *ſays he*, and *ſays ſhe*, and *ſays I*. No more at preſent, but reſt

Your Humble Servant.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

Dear *Nancy*, *July* 10.

THIS comes to let you know I am in good health, bleſſed be God for it, hoping to hear the like from you, and all friends. Why do people

people laugh at a letter thus begun? Can I ſay any thing more to the purpoſe, or more expreſſive? Oh! but then, it is ſo common, ſo vulgar, I warrant! So, I'm to rack my brain to get a new way of beginning my letters every time I write. A pretty ſtory, troth! Hang gentility, I'll not ſtudy it. I delight, *Nancy*, in your letters; there is nothing conſtrained in them; no long-tailed words, nothing as if you wanted to be thought wiſe; they don't ſavour of romance. I remember you ſaid, in one of yours, That you thought I might write the *Hiſtory of* Clarinda Cathcart, *and* Fanny Renton. I am afraid, *Nancy*, you think me ambitious of ſuch a taſk. If you do, and the reſt of my acquaintance ſhould think the ſame, Lord have mercy on me! I ſhall never get a huſband. But what am I

to

to do? I muſt write genteelly, and, at the ſame time, I muſt take care and avoid pretending to be wiſe. That would be a pretence, indeed! But how ſhall I learn to pleaſe every body? Why, by endeavouring to copy the agreeable Miſs *Nancy Floyd.*

Is not that compliment made with a genteel natural grace? You proteſt you think it very pretty. You ſee, *Nancy*, this *Harry* has no effect on my gay humour; I think he rather adds to it: What delightful walks we have! Huſh! don't tell; I catched him, yeſterday, ſtealing a pretty look at *Clarinda*; and, on her obſerving him, he took off his eyes with a ſigh, as much as to ſay, ſuch charms are above the hopes of a knight baronet. I, to be ſure, *Nancy*, I am in the full bloom of youth and beauty. Nothing leſs, nothing leſs, my dear, than a coronet.

My

My father tells me, that Sir *George Evergreen* has promiſed to be a friend to Mr. *Hope*, on my account. He ſuppoſes him to be an humble ſervant of mine. My father knows on whoſe account I am ſo earneſt about him; but he has not let Sir *George* into the ſecret. *Fanny* has told her brother all about her love affair. How dearly do we girls like to talk on this ſubject! She was quite impatient, but did not know how to begin. However, he ſoon gave her an opportunity, by letting her know, that Sir *William* and my lady had told him about it. He approves of her preferring the man ſhe likes, to grandeur with one that is indifferent to her. He even ventured to tell Lady *Renton* ſo, though ſhe has laid out, in the faireſt light, all the advantages that would ariſe to the whole family, by her marriage with

with Lord *Elmor*. Her ladyſhip ſays, ſhe ſees the whole family are againſt her; and if *Tom Hope* had any thing, ſhe would be the leſs ſurpriſed. However, we think her ladyſhip has ſeemed in better humour with *Fanny*, ſince the arrival of her ſon.

Lord *Elmor* is here almoſt every day. He has begged Mr. *Renton*, in the moſt earneſt manner, to uſe his intereſt with his ſiſter. He muſt be miſerable, he ſays, without her. Mr. *Renton* tells him, he would be more ſo, if he had her; that, for his part, he would not marry the greateſt angel on earth, if he knew ſhe had beſtowed her affections on another. My lord hopes a great deal from time and perſeverance. As he does not know that Sir *William* approves of Mr. *Hope*, he imagines that can never be a marriage, as he hears the young gentleman

man is going abroad, and knows that, at preſent, he has nothing, and dares not viſit in the houſe. Mr. *Hope* is made eaſy with the kind aſſurances of his *Fanny*, which ſhe ſeldom omits a day putting carefully in the root of the great tree. Lord *Elmor* and *Bob Temple* are often here. We frequently have a concert, where your *Clarinda* is reckoned a principal performer, both in the vocal and inſtrumental part. You know I'm always ſo obliging, as to take every thing, ſaid in my praiſe, as ſincere. This *Harry* has a pretty new way of making love; but of that in my next. May God bleſs you, and give you all you want and wiſh! prays, ſincerely,

Your ever chearful,

And happy, as yet,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Mr.

Mr. RENTON, *to the Right Hon. Lord* EDGAR.

Dear *Edgar*,

THE deſcription you gave me of this charming creature, falls ſo ſhort of her due, that I can only forgive you on the account of my thankfulneſs, that ſhe has not made ſo deep an impreſſion on your heart as ſhe has done on mine. What an alteration do I find in myſelf in the ſhort time I have been at *Renton Park!* Oh! *Edgar*, I never was in love till now. How often have I admired one woman for a face, another for her ſhape and air, a third for her modeſt ſweetneſs; but here is every qualification, in its greateſt perfection, centered in the amiable *Clarinda*. I always uſed

to

to ſay, *Edgar*, if ever I married, I would have a woman that had rather a ſerious, than a gay turn. I never was fond of your coquets, further than to ſpend an idle hour with them: But in Miſs *Cathcart* is all the ſprightlineſs of that character, with the moſt lively wit, the greateſt delicacy, and without either affectation or ill-nature. I had always a great opinion of the ſex; yet, I own, *Edgar*, I never expected to find, in one woman, both wit and judgment; indeed, ſeldom in a man, till he purchaſes the latter by age and experience; but to find it in ſo angelic a creature, in the bloom of Eighteen! O *Edgar!* you may laugh if you will, but I fear I am utterly undone. I dare not hope.

Poor *Elmor!* how do I now pity thee! Yet were I, as he is, certain, that my angel's affections were engaged—

gaged—Oh, why do I call her mine! I ſay, were I certain her affections were engaged, I ſhould languiſh out an unhappy life in ſome diſtant country, rather than owe her hand to the entreaty of her friends. But for what am I writing to you? Why, for no other reaſon, *Edgar*, than to let you know I muſt either be the happieſt of mortals, or the moſt miſerable. My angel (yes, *Edgar*, ſhe muſt be mine) has left *Renton Park*, without my finding reſolution enough to let her know of my love, otherwiſe than by ſighs, and an aukward behaviour. What an advantage has that man, who ſuppoſes himſelf in love, whoſe eyes, I may ſay, are only affected; to him whoſe whole heart is engaged, with not only the outward charms of his miſtreſs, but with her ſoul, as well as perſon!

How

How can I know, you will ſay, in ſo ſhort a time, the beauties of my charmer's mind? Oh! *Edgar*, I could give you a thouſand incidents, that ſhew her above the little frailties of her ſex. The dear creature can diſcern merit in an humble dependent, when below moſt people's obſervation. She can, with eaſe, without oſtentation, draw in others to make the ſame obſervation. Then, how do her fine eyes ſparkle with pleaſure, when ſhe finds ſhe has gained her end, by every one preſent promiſing to do all in their power for the advancement of the perſon before unregarded! Nor does ſhe ſtop here; but with as much pains, endeavours to get the promiſes performed, as *Chloe* would to find out an infallible waſh for her complexion, or a doubting maid to find out the abode of a famous fortune-teller. No

ſcandal proceeds from her lips; but, with a generous freedom, ſhe gloſſes over the faults of others by ſuppoſing they err rather from want of thought, than from a bad heart. O *Edgar!* "were women all like her, how would the men adore them, and all the buſineſs of their lives be loving!" But I will ſay no more. It is within ten minutes of the time I am to ſet out with *Fanny* to meet my angel in *Forreſt Park*. Let me ſee you to-morrow, if poſſible: I have a thouſand things to ſay. Adieu.

H. RENTON.

Miſs

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

Dear *Nancy*,

I THINK I ended my laſt with telling you, that *Harry* had a new method of making love. I wiſh it may not have a new effect on *Clarinda*. But why do I ſay a *new* way? Why, 'tis new to me; but, I fancy, it is the only way when one is ſerious, or wants to appear ſo; and which is the caſe with *Harry*, I am not yet able to determine. All I can ſay is, his looks and ſighs expreſs more than the moſt eloquent lover ever could do by confirming the ſincerity of the praiſes he beſtows with a thouſand proteſtations. But as to the effect it has on me—don't be alarmed, *Nancy*—it has only raiſed my curioſity; that's all. I want,

want, of all things, to know, whether a young gentleman, juſt come from his travels, may not, without any love in his heart, have acquired this ſkill, and ſo try its effect on his fair country-women, the firſt opportunity; and then, perhaps, when the poor, unſuſpecting girl begins to return ſigh for ſigh, the young gentleman laughs in his ſleeve, and admires the advantage of a good education, that can make him conquer the heart of the pretty innocent, without being at the expence of a ſingle vow. Is not this an ill-natured conſtruction? Certainly. But remember, it is not altogether my own; I am certain I have heard of ſuch a thing; yet ſure, 'tis impoſſible one of the family of the *Renton's* would (though he could) put it in practice.

I left

I left *Renton Park* yeſterday, my time of allowance from my aunt being run out, and I would not, on any account, ſuffer Lady *Renton* to aſk it to be prolonged. Mr. *Renton's* ſighs, *Nancy*, have not had that influence over me yet. I muſt confeſs I am a little queeriſh, though it muſt be from curioſity, nothing elſe. I eat as well, ſleep as well, am as gay, and look as well as ever. But pray, *Nancy*, will you tell me, what is love like? I think, I can compare it to nothing ſo properly as punch. The ingredients, certainly, muſt be of the ſame nature. Strong and weak, ſour and ſweet, and when it gets a ſqueeze of the orange-peel, bitter. Weak heads, you know, are ſoon intoxicated, and the ſtrongeſt may be overcome. A little of it enlivens, too much overpowers the ſenſes. Abſence, I think, I may

compare to ſleep; and when once we ſicken, nothing ſo excellent a remedy as a little of the beſt part of the compoſition, taken moderately. So, *Nancy*, if,—remember I ſay, *if*—that *Harry Renton* ſhould intoxicate the ſtrong head of your *Clarinda*, ſend for her to town directly, and, in the company of *Bob Frolick*, let her again have the pleaſure, without any of the pain. But let me aſk you another queſtion, *Nancy*; I hope it is not ſo ſcandalous for a woman to be intoxicated with love, without being courted, as to be intoxicated with liquor! God forbid! If you think it is, ſend an expreſs immediately on the receipt of this, and then off I fly, with my little ſymptom of curioſity.

Enter Sir *William Fenton's* ſervant. "Madam, a letter"— A fig— a card from

from *Fanny*.—Why the deuce did the girl fold it ſo, and ſeal it!—"Miſs "*Fanny Renton's* compliments to "Miſs *Cathcart*; hopes ſhe will meet "her this evening as uſual in *Forreſt* "*Park*. Begs ſhe will excuſe the "freedom of bringing her brother "with her, as it is breaking in "on their promiſed rules of pri-"vacy; but has been teazed into "compliance, which ſhe hopes Miſs "*Cathcart's* goodneſs will forgive."—Shall I forgive her, *Nancy*, and go? You ſay, yes, by all means. You command, then I muſt obey.

"Miſs *Cathcart* returns her com-"pliments to Miſs *Fanny Renton*. "She is always ready to excuſe the "errors of her friends, eſpecially when "they proceed from good-nature; "will meet her at the appointed "hour, and doubts not but Mr. *Renton*

" will ſo far enliven them, as to make " up, in ſome meaſure, for prevent- " ing their *tête à tête* converſation." *Cupid*, you ſay, *Nancy*, owes me a ſpite, and one time or other will— Why, in that caſe, my dear, you'll ſay I need not fly; as well now as at another time. But the bell rings for dinner. Adieu.

Half an hour after Ten.

The moſt agreeable ſoft-ſighing walk!—*Cupid*, I imagine, ſhoots moſt of his darts in the country, and at this ſeaſon of the year. But, my dear, to be ſerious; this *Harry* is really, in every body's eyes, a charming young fellow, and I do think, if his tongue would utter the ſame language with his eyes, I ſhould be in danger of giving up all thoughts of a Coronet, and be content with being

being plain Mrs. *Renton.* But if he really loves me, what in the world keeps him ſilent! Perhaps he has left a *Clementina* behind him. In that caſe, do you think, I ſhould be as generous and diſintereſted as Miſs *Byron?* No doubt I would be aiming at it, with inward hopes of being as happy in the end.

Are you not ſurprized at hearing no account of the ball Sir *William* promiſed on his ſon's arrival? It is delayed, my dear, till the 12th of next month, which, it ſeems, is *Harry's* birth-day; and, by that time, 'tis expected, Sir *Charles Cheſter* and the Captain will be arrived. Sir *William* and Lady *Cheſter* have both had letters from them, and they are on their way home. *Harry* has aſked my ladyſhip for his partner; but I told him, I would not make

any engagement, till I ſee if his brother *Frank* comes; for, of all things in the world, I am fond of ſhewing away with an officer. But now I think on it, I had rather dance with Sir *Charles Cheſter*. It gives one a look of vaſt conſequence, to dance with a married man of rank. They generally ſingle out the greateſt beauties. — You have charming ſpirits, Miſs *Cathcart*; I wiſh—What do you wiſh? — That you men had as much ſpirit as our ſex? Vain, Mr. *Renton*, is that wiſh; but, you know, what we have in ſpirit, your lordly ſex boaſt of in penetration, ſolidity, and good ſenſe. I can boaſt, madam, of having penetration to find out all theſe in Miſs *Cathcart*.— So, you think, ſir, it requires penetration to find it out!—Well, don't you think I give an inſtance of

mine,

mine, when I find out you intended a compliment?

You ſee my dear *Nancy*, I can be as free and as eaſy, as if I had not the leaſt ſymptom; and, indeed, my dear, if I have any, I believe 'tis all owing to you, or ſuch a thing ſhould never have entered my head.

All the neighbouring quality and gentry, as I wrote to you, are to be invited to this ball. Lord *Elmor*, if he can find ſpirits, is to dance with *Caroline*; Lord *Edgar* with *Fanny*, *Bob Temple* with Sir *William's Wild Filly*, and Sir *Robert Forreſt* with Lady *Cheſter*. If Sir *Charles* be arrived, and I don't honour him with my hand, he is laid out for Lady *Forreſt*. The Captain is left to chuſe for himſelf. The reſt of the company are not yet invited. Patterns of ſilks are ſent for: all the family are to

be new rigged on this happy occaſion. I have wrote to my father, and expect he will allow me to chuſe a gown from the patterns: Sir *William's* mercer and ours is the ſame. As for what other things I ſhall need, I'll incloſe a note to you to ſend to my milliner. At the ſame time I muſt beg the favour of you and *Betſy*, to look at the laces, and let every thing be done up to your taſte; but, my dear, let them be quite *alamode*. A few days after the ball you ſhall have me with you in *London*. My father tells me I muſt be in town before Sir *George Evergreen* and his lady go away.

Mr. *Renton* is very deſirous that Mr. *Hope* ſhould be invited to the ball, but dares not venture to mention it to his mother. Sir *William* ſays, it would be improper on many accounts;

counts; and *Fanny* herſelf thinks ſhe ſhould not know how to behave if he was to be there, as matters ſtand at preſent. So Mr. *Renton* ſays he muſt acquieſce. He has a vaſt regard for Mr. *Hope*, and ſees him frequently, unknown to Lady *Renton*. I ſaw Mr. *Hope* at church on *Sunday*, the only time I ever had the pleaſure of ſeeing him. I muſt ſay he is very handſome; though I can't help thinking him inferior to Mr. *Renton*. But what ſignifies beauty in a man? For, as my aunt ſays, it is an old ſaying, in either man or woman, it is the firſt thing looked at, and the firſt thing forgotten.

But I ſhould never have forgiven myſelf, *Nancy*, if I had ſent off this letter without remembering to tell you of the meeting betwixt Lady

Forreſt and Miſs *Sharpiſh*. It was on *Sunday*. I had joined Lady *Forreſt* in the church-yard. The Miſs *Manly's* and the Miſs *Sharpiſh's* were a little before us. Miſs *Manly*, looking behind, made us a curtſy. Immediately after I obſerved them to go a little out of the way. "Pray," ſaid I to Lady *Forreſt*, "was not "your ladyſhip acquainted with the "Miſs *Sharpiſh's?*" "Yes," ſaid ſhe, "I was very intimate with them: "Lord bleſs me, is not that them "with the Miſs *Manly's?* Do you "know, I never heard they were in "the country till yeſterday? I wiſh "they don't think I've omitted ſend-"ing them a card intentionally: "let us, my dear, make up to them "as quick as poſſible, before they "get into their carriage. Turning "to her ſervant, *Peter*, ſaid ſhe, go

"up

" up to thoſe ladies who are with the " Miſs *Manly's*, and beg them to ſtop, " as I would be glad to ſpeak with " them."

Away ran *Peter*, but could ſcarce get up to them, they were making ſuch haſte. Don't you ſuſpect, *Nancy*, I felt an ill-natured pleaſure at this? If you do, I know you will tax me; ſo I may as well confeſs, that you are at leaſt not very far miſtaken. See the ladies turned round, and waiting till we come up.

Lady *Forreſt.* Miſs *Sharpiſh*, I am extremely glad to ſee you; Miſs *Lucy*, Miſs *Nancy*, (gives each a hand) how do you do?

Miſs *Sharpiſh.* (With a face as red as ſcarlet) I wiſh your ladyſhip joy—I did not obſerve—I hope Sir *Robert*—*Lucy*, you tread on my ſack—Miſs *Cathcart*—(a curtſy)

Lady *Forreſt*. I was quite ſurpriſed when I heard, yeſterday, by Miſs *Parker*, of your being in the country; I hope I ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing you, ladies, at *Forreſt Abbey*.

Miſs *Sharpiſh*. Your ladyſhip may be certain, we will do ourſelves that honour.

Miſs *Manly*, giving my arm a pinch, ſaid, "This is charming wea-"ther! the country is delightful at "this ſeaſon of the year." By this time we were got to the area, where Lady *Forreſt* was taken up with the compliments paid her by moſt of her new acquaintance. I had my ſhare, with ſeveral preſſing invitations from ladies I had only ſeen once at Lady *Forreſt's*.

Miſs *Sharpiſh* catched an opportunity, and coming up to me, ſaid, "She was much obliged to me for

"not

" not letting Lady *Forreſt* know what " ſhe had ſaid at Miſs *Manly's.*" By this time I began to pity her confuſion; for ſhe ſtill ſpoke with heſitation, and coughed up, as it were, every word. I aſſured her, ſhe need not have given herſelf the leaſt uneaſineſs on that account; for that I never choſe to be an inſtrument of making quarrels. " I believe," added I, " Miſs *Sharpiſh*, I ſaid ſome things " to you, for which I ought to make " an apology; but, I hope, we ſhall " forgive each other; I aſſure you, I " now ſincerely forgive you, as what " you ſaid can now be of no bad " conſequence." " You are extrem- " ly good, madam," returned ſhe, " I " ſhould be very happy to have the " pleaſure of ſeeing you, while you " are in the country, along with the " Miſs *Manly's.*" " I ſhall certainly," replied

replied I, "give myſelf that pleaſure: "Adieu."

Thus, *Nancy*, did we part friends. Lady *Forreſt* aſked me afterwards, if I did not obſerve Miſs *Sharpiſh* looked as if ſhe had been piqued at a lady of her conſequence not being known to be in the country? See, *Nancy*, how vain people are ſuſpected of taking an affront, when, perhaps, ſuch a thing never entered her head!

A meſſage juſt now from Lady *Renton* to my aunt! Sir *William* is taken with a ſwimming in his head, and a violent reaching. God forbid any thing ſhould happen to that good worthy man! My aunt is deſired to come in haſte. I ſhall be quite uneaſy till I hear there is no danger. Another meſſage. Lord bleſs me! how I am frightned! I would fain go, but my aunt certainly thinks it improper,

proper, or ſhe would aſk me.—My aunt is gone.—I don't know what in the world to do with myſelf. I can't write, nor I can't read. I'll take a walk in the garden.—I am returned. Ah! *Nancy*, what a damp I find on my ſpirits! I have had a long walk, but the purling of the ſtreams, and the melody of the birds, have added, I think, to my uneaſineſs. *Nancy*, what muſt one feel, when a perſon is in danger, for whom we have a ſtrong natural affection, improved by their kindneſs and care, when one feels ſo much for a new acquaintance? But, I don't know how it is, I certainly, for the ſhort time I have known this family, am uncommonly concerned for their happineſs and welfare. I have ſent *Robert* to enquire how he does. What poor frail mortals are we, *Nancy!* Subject

to

to pain, in body and mind! How are we continually, in the hours of health, ſcheming out days of future pleaſure, when we know not what a day, a moment, may bring forth! And then, when we are in the leaſt diſcompoſed, how ready to dread the worſt! And yet, *Nancy*, we can be proud of any little ſuperiority we have, or imagine we have, over one another. But how difficult is it to live in a vain world, and keep free of its follies! We ought to be humble in proſperity, and patient in adverſity; but, inſtead of this, are we not ready, in proſperity, to be thoughtleſs and vain; to imagine we merit all the good we poſſeſs, and that thoſe below us are ſcarcely worth our notice? Few will own this, yet people of almoſt every degree put it in practice.

practice. We never conſider, that often,

> Fortune to the unworthy gives,
> While patient merit ſcarcely lives.

And then, when any ſudden change happens to us in proſperity, our hearts, unuſed to croſſes, ſink under the burden. *Robert* is returned. God be thanked, Sir *William* is better. But my lady cannot part with my aunt, ſo deſires I will come, and ſit with the young ladies, and bring my night cloaths along with me. I am glad they have ſent for me; though I have no notion of apparitions, yet I ſhould not like to have ſlept on a floor by myſelf in this great ghaſtly houſe, and my ſpirits fluttered as they are at preſent. I will ſeal up this, in caſe any of the ſervants at *Renton Park* ſhould have occaſion to go into a poſt town.

town. Compliments where due, and believe me ever, my dear *Nancy*,

Yours, affectionately,

CLARINDA CATHCART.

Miſs CATHCART, *to Miſs* FLOYD.

I AM ſtill, my dear *Nancy*, at *Renton Park*. Poor Sir *William* is in the greateſt danger. The phyſicians think him in a galloping conſumption, and own there is ſcarce any room for hope. How is all the happineſs of this family turned into mourning! Lady *Renton* ſcarce ever leaves him a moment: ſhe is quite compoſed, though grief is fixed on her countenance. Lady *Cheſter* is much affected, and *Caroline*, *Fanny*, and *Nell*, are conſtantly in tears.

Mr.

Mr. *Renton* ſcarce ever leaves his own chamber, but at meals, or when Sir *William* (which is ſeldom) deſires him to ſit a little by him. He thinks himſelf dying, but ſays, there is nothing ſo terrible in death as people are apt to imagine, when they think on it in full health. 'Tis a debt that all muſt pay, and whether it be to day, or ſome years hence, is a matter of very little moment.

My aunt told me, he took Lady *Renton* by the hand, and, with a ſmile on his countenance, ſaid, "My dear, "how much reaſon have we to be "thankful, that we have lived to ſee "our children grown men and women; "and that they are all good, dutiful, "and affectionate to one another! "You and I have had many joyful "and happy days, and may ſay, Mrs. "*Cathcart*, we have ſeen nothing, all

"our

"our married life, but the ſun-ſhine "of proſperity. Now, my dear, "ought we not to be thankful to "that being, who has protected us "ſo long, and not repine at his pro-"vidence, who, we know, orders "every thing for the beſt, and, if we "fail in our duty, will graciouſly for-"give us if we are ſincere in our re-"pentance, and will, in his good "time, give us a happy meeting in "heaven, where we ſhall never part "more, and where all the happineſs "we have enjoyed here, ſhall appear "as vanity and vexation of ſpirit in "compariſon of what we ſhall then "enjoy?" O *Nancy*! who would not wiſh to die the death of the righteous? My aunt ſays, Lady *Renton* was ſilent, and the doctor coming in, there was no more ſaid. Sir *William* has had a very eaſy and quiet night, but

the

the phyſicians don't ſeem to hope much from it. He is anxious for his ſon *Frank* and Sir *Charles Cheſter's* arrival. "I would wiſh," ſaid he, "to have all my family about me; "but God's will be done."

My aunt has told me juſt now, that he has been talking to Lady *Renton* about Mr. *Hope*. "I truſt," ſaid he, "my dear, you will forgive my con- "cealing the encouragement I have "given that young gentleman with "regard to *Fanny*; and I do aſſure "you, my deareſt *Charlotte*, it affords "me great ſatisfaction, at this pre- "ſent time, that I have not been "biaſſed by a proſpect of riches or "grandeur. They are very tempt- "ing, even to people, who have ex- "perienced the little happineſs they "afford." But here, ſeeing Lady *Renton* in tears, "My dear life," continued he,

he, "I know you had a good inten-
"tion. God Almighty regards the
"heart, and, as I ſaid before, par-
"dons our failings, which, if he did
"not, who could ſtand before him?
"I knew you too well to think you
"would perſiſt in an error, and was
"willing to leave it to your own
"good ſenſe to find it out. Thus
"much, my dear, the occaſion obliges
"me to let you know; and as, in
"all probability, you will be the ſur-
"viving parent, the double duty,
"that will then lie on you, will be
"a ſufficient motive to make you ex-
"amine narrowly what is moſt likely
"to ſecure the happineſs of our chil-
"dren, both in this world, and that
"which is to come. When we con-
"ſider ſeriouſly, we ſhall always find
"it impoſſible to preſerve the one for
"any long continuance, without hav-

"in

"ing a view to the other." Lady *Renton* ſaid, "ſhe ſaw her error, and "hoped for forgiveneſs."

Sir *William* added, "he intended "to have ſummoned his family to-"gether, and give them ſome ad-"vice concerning their future con-"duct; but, as he did not yet think "himſelf near his end, he would delay "it for a little time, till he ſaw if "Sir *Charles* and *Frank* would come. "The words of a dying perſon (ſaid "he) Mrs. *Cathcart*, make often a "deep impreſſion. It is a character "that all muſt repreſent; and I think, "the head of a family in particular "has a call upon him, if able, to give "advice and conſolation to his ſur-"viving friends and dependents. It "is a good prayer, *from ſudden and "unprepared death, Good Lord, deliver "us*! And certainly it is to be ſup-

"poſed

" poſed from this prayer, that we " wiſh, in this way, to make uſe of " that mercy, if granted us."

How my heart ſinks, *Nancy*, at the grief of this once happy family! Sir *William* ſeems to be the only one that ſtands in no need of conſolation; he is all peaceful ſerenity. We were all in the room with him this afternoon. " What a delightful family I " have!" (ſaid he) " Miſs *Cathcart*, I " take you in as one of them; you " are the neice of my good worthy " friend, and, by what I have ſeen " of you, a very deſerving young " woman." Seeing us all in tears, he ſaid, " Moderate ſorrow for the loſs " of thoſe, that were dear to us, " was not only allowable, but that " the want of it was a ſign of a " very hardened diſpoſition; he hoped, " however, we had all too much good

" ſenſe

ſenſe to encourage what, if carried to too great a height, was not only prejudicial to the health, but was, in the greateſt degree, ſinful in the eyes of that being, whoſe we are, and who has our well-being in view in every diſpenſation: He then repeated theſe lines:

Since all the downward tracts of time,
God's watchful eye ſurveys,
Then who ſo wiſe to chuſe our lot,
And regulate our ways?
Since none can doubt his equal love,
Unmeaſurably kind,
To his unerring, gracious will,
Be every wiſh reſign'd.
Good, when he gives, ſupremely good,
Nor leſs, when he denies;
Even croſſes, from his ſovereign hand,
Are bleſſings in diſguiſe.

Lady *Cheſter* has juſt now received a letter from Sir *Charles*. They will

be here to-morrow. Good God! How I pity the captain, who expects to find all his friends in health, ready to rejoice at his safe arrival, after a dangerous campaign! Sir *William* has been told, they are expected. The tears rushed into his eyes. "Shall I, "then, my God!" said he, "be spared "to see my son, my dear son *Frank*, "and to bless him with the rest of my "family? O my children, my dear "children! my dear children!" and he fainted for the first time. Lady *Chester* was in the room. She gave a great shriek. We thought he was gone. I rushed into the chamber, and assisted my aunt in holding Lady *Renton*, who had almost fainted in her arms. Lady *Chester* had sunk motionless in the easy chair. The doctor was only in the next room, and came in along with me. He desired us not

to

to be alarmed, ſaying, Sir *William* was only in a fainting fit, which, probably, he might have ſeveral returns of. Mr. *Renton* came into the room, and, with looks of the moſt piercing tenderneſs, ſupported his father, till nature, not yet quite exhauſted, without the aſſiſtance of art, breathed again into him the breath of life.

Oh, my dear *Nancy!* my ſpirits are quite ſunk. All nature ſeems to droop at the approach of the death of this good man. Every flower and ſhrub I look at has, methinks, loſt its beauty. All the ſervants have their faces ſwelled with crying. The tenants, many of them with their ſilver locks, are here continually enquiring if there are any hopes, and putting up their fervent prayers for his recovery. The great

dog does nothing but howl and cry. Every thing ſeems as if it gave a preſage of death. How I dread to-morrow! I can't write much at a time; but, as often as I can make a ſtart up to my room, I will write you a line or two. *Fanny* and I ſleep together; but broken are the ſlumbers I get; then, what muſt be thoſe of that good, affectionate girl! She knows not of her father's having told Lady *Renton* the ſecret of Mr. *Hope*. She mentions not her fears concerning him; yet I dare ſay, her anxiety, on that account, is twined with the ſorrow ſhe will feel for the approaching death of ſo kind and indulgent a parent. I have ſeveral times had an inclination to tell her; but have always checked myſelf, as I think it will be better when all is over, and

will

will help to alleviate her grief, when at its full height.

My aunt has juſt now told me, that Sir *William* deſired Mr. *Friendly* and Mr. *Hope* to be ſent for; but, after conſidering a little, he ſaid he would wait till he ſaw *Frank* and Sir *Charles*, as they are expected to-morrow. But my aunt thinks it beſt for me to acquaint *Fanny*. I will go down preſently, and ſee if I can perſuade her to take a turn in the garden. When I return, I ſhall let you know how the dear girl is affected.

When I went down ſtairs, I found Lady *Cheſter*, *Caroline*, *Fanny*, and *Nell*, ſitting in Lady *Cheſter*'s bedchamber. On my opening the door, every one ſtarted, and ſeemed to dread a meſſenger of ill news. "O "*Clarinda!*" they cried, "have you "heard of any alteration? Have you

"ſeen your aunt, or the doctor?" "I have ſeen my aunt," I ſaid, "who told me that Sir *William* is "lying quiet at preſent, and breathes "very eaſy." God be thanked!" they cried, "Oh! could we hope "that the phyſicians may be miſ-"taken!" My dear *Fanny*," ſaid I, turning towards her, "I have ſome-"thing to ſay to you; will you take "a walk with me in the garden?" "I am afraid, my dear *Clarinda*," anſwered ſhe, her eyes ſwimming in tears, "you can have nothing to "ſay to me, at preſent, that can fix "my attention; but," riſing, "I am "ready to go with you."

We went, arm in arm, to what they call the back alcove. We were ſilent the whole way. After we were ſeated, I aſked her, if it ſhould pleaſe God that Sir *William* did not recover,

recover, whether ſhe thought Lady *Renton* would continue to favour Lord *Elmor* as much as ever? "What "reaſon," ſaid ſhe, "have I to think "otherwiſe? But, *Clarinda*, I am "afraid you think the grief I am in "for my dear father, proceeds from "ſelfiſh motives; but if conſenting "this moment never to ſee Mr. *Hope* "again, could ſave my father, I "would chearfully conſent; and ſo, "I dare ſay, would Mr. *Hope*; for "he loves him as he does Mr. "*Friendly*, or as he could his own "father. Oh, *Clarinda*! You know "not half the goodneſs of this dear "parent. How, ſince my moſt ten-"der infancy, can I look back, and "remember the care and affection "he has ſhewn to every one of us, "as we ſtood moſt in need of his "paternal kindneſs, without feeling

"the moſt pungent grief, at the "thought of his being ſeperated "from us for ever?"

"But, my dear *Fanny*," ſaid I, "you don't conſider, that, by the "courſe of nature, we muſt lay our "account with loſing theſe dear rela- "tions. You have the proſpect of one "ſtill nearer, who will ſhare all your "troubles, and whom, by duty as "well as inclination, you will find "ſtill dearer to you than the beſt of "parents. The preſent evil we dread "is always the worſt. But call, my "dear girl, back to your remem- "brance, your ſituation when you "thought Mr. *Hope* in danger. The "world appeared ſolitary, and you "thought it almoſt impoſſible to ex- "iſt, if he was no more."

"Indeed, my dear *Clarinda*, I am "a poor weak creature, and do not

"know

" know my own heart. But if it
" is as you ſay, have not I double
" cauſe to be afflicted, ſince, in
" loſing one, I loſe both? For how
" can you ſay I ſhall have Mr. *Hope* to
" leſſen my grief, when, you know,
" I dare not ſee him? And ſhall I
" add to my poor mother's affliction,
" by letting her know, that my fa-
" ther had concealed his opinion from
" her? And when I have no other
" parent to countenance me, ſhall I
" trample on her authority, and do
" as I pleaſe? O *Clarinda!* ſure you
" can't have ſo bad an opinion of
" me: No, my dear; I have wrote
" to Mr. *Hope*, that I know my mo-
" ther will never force me to marry
" Lord *Elmor*; and that he may
" depend on it, I will never give my
" hand to any other than himſelf; but
" at the ſame time, I think it my

"duty to give up a correſpondence "with him, till providence ſhall "turn things more in our favour "than they are at preſent. I do not "think, *Clarinda*, you will diſapprove "of what I have done."

"No, my dear," ſaid I, "I can't "diſapprove of ſuch a good and "dutiful heart, and I hope you "will be rewarded. But, my dear "*Fanny*, could you think ſo good a "man as your father, when he thinks "himſelf dying, would leave this "world without letting Lady *Renton* "know that he approves of Mr. "*Hope's* addreſſes? And do you not "think, when he really lets her know, "that it will make a right impreſſion "on her mind?"

"My dear *Clarinda*," replied *Fanny*, "you would make me think you "have heard ſomething about it.

"Such

"Such a thought, I own," added ſhe, "has come into my head; but as "you know, I have been ſeveral "times in the room, when Sir "*William* has given us all many "good inſtructions, I thought he "certainly judged this improper to "be mentioned, as it would be "adding to my dear mother's "pain."

"No, my loved *Fanny*," replied I, "you are miſtaken: he has ſpoken "of it to your mother; and ſhe "has acknowledged herſelf to be "in the wrong: And not only this, "but Sir *William* has deſired Mr. "*Hope* may be ſent for, that he "may bleſs him with the reſt of his "children."

The good creature, *Nancy*, flung her arms about my neck, and ſaid, "O "*Clarinda! Clarinda!* Muſt I loſe ſo

"good

"good a father!" The dear girl ſobbed as if her heart would have burſt. I endeavoured to ſooth her with all the arguments I could think on, and, in ſome meaſure, effected my purpoſe. I will write no more till to-morrow.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

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